

THE DYNAMICS OF THE HOUSING MARKET IN RURAL WALES

**A thesis submitted in candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of Wales**

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1993

ABSTRACT

Considerable attention has been given to housing issues in the countryside over recent years. The 1980s and early 1990s have witnessed a whole host of academic publications, policy reports and media articles, with the focus predominantly on the issue of housing affordability. In many ways, the enquiry adds to this burgeoning literature on rural housing issues in conventional terms. In other ways, however, it attempts to provide a broader view of the rural housing market, by considering rural housing issues alongside wider processes of socio-economic restructuring within the Welsh countryside, and also by incorporating in the research methodology elements of housing theory developed predominantly outside the rural arena. Consideration is given to some key aspects of housing and socio-economic change within rural Wales generally and in two case study areas in particular. A detailed examination of the local housing market in each study area then follows based on a series of individual surveys and interviews. Attention is given to state intervention within the market and to the changing nature of social rented housing provision and allocation. In addition, the operations and interests of key agents involved in the supply and distribution of private housing are considered. Finally, the consumption of housing within each study area is investigated, based on a survey of 400 households. The linkages between the local housing market and population in- and out-movement, and the incidence and nature of housing need are examined, together with respondents' attitudes to further residential development and housing need within the community.

dedicated to the memory of my Nanna

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are a number of people whom I would like to thank in producing this thesis:

Bill Edwards, for his careful supervision, gentle encouragement and warm friendship over the last five years;

Paul Cloke, for helping develop my interests in rural research and for allowing me sufficient time to complete the thesis during this year;

My mum and dad, for all their support over many years and;

Caroline, who has endured the process of thesis production for the last two years.

Finally, my thanks are also extended to the individuals and organisations within rural Wales who provided help and information during the course of this study.

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ABSTRACT

Considerable attention has been given to housing issues in the countryside over recent years. The 1980s and early 1990s have witnessed a whole host of academic publications, policy reports and media articles, with the focus predominantly on the issue of housing affordability. In many ways, the enquiry adds to this burgeoning literature on rural housing issues in conventional terms. In other ways, however, it attempts to provide a broader view of the rural housing market, by considering rural housing issues alongside wider processes of socio-economic restructuring within the Welsh countryside, and also by incorporating in the research methodology elements of housing theory developed predominantly outside the rural arena. Consideration is given to some key aspects of housing and socio-economic change within rural Wales generally and in two case study areas in particular. A detailed examination of the local housing market in each study area then follows based on a series of individual surveys and interviews. Attention is given to state intervention within the market and to the changing nature of social rented housing provision and allocation. In addition, the operations and interests of key agents involved in the supply and distribution of private housing are considered. Finally, the consumption of housing within each study area is investigated, based on a survey of 400 households. The linkages between the local housing market and population in- and out-movement, and the incidence and nature of housing need are examined, together with respondents' attitudes to further residential development and housing need within the community.

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PREFACE

Considerable attention has been given to housing issues in the British countryside over recent years. The 1980s and early 1990s have witnessed a whole host of academic publications, policy reports and media articles, with the focus predominantly on the issue of affordability. Housing problems, in many respects, have been seen as creating a domino effect within rural areas, as young people are forced out of the countryside by the rising price of housing and the lack of rental opportunities and the social and cultural fabric of rural communities becomes weakened. In academic terms, interest in rural housing issues can be seen to stem from two main factors:

- (i) a resurgence of interest in rural issues generally, as processes of economic restructuring, repopulation and social / cultural recomposition have brought 'the rural' into mainstream socio-theoretical debates;
- (ii) the 1980s housing legislation has focused academic attention on the consequences of changes in tenorial options and increased private sector domination of the housing market.

In many ways, this enquiry adds to the burgeoning literature on rural housing issues in conventional terms. In other ways, however, it attempts to provide a new, broader view of the rural housing market, by considering rural housing issues alongside wider socio-economic restructuring within the countryside, and also by incorporating in the research methodology elements of housing theory developed predominantly outside of the rural arena.

Chapter One begins with a critique of previous studies of rural housing and an outline of some neglected facets of housing study. The suggestion that housing studies need to pay greater attention to the restructuring of rural society and economy leads to a review of such change in both a British and Welsh context. The development of rural housing

studies is then traced from an earlier focus on housing conditions, through housing competition, to work on housing conflict and domestic property classes (Shucksmith 1990b). Finally, the criticism that rural housing studies have in many ways been blinkered leads the discussion into consideration of some key facets of study pioneered by urban housing researchers. The chapter finishes by setting a new agenda for the study of rural housing, an agenda which the remaining chapters of the thesis explore.

Chapter Two considers the rural housing market in a wider context of economic restructuring and socio-cultural recomposition by considering recent changes within rural Wales. Drawing on a range of sources - both published and unpublished - the chapter can be seen as a review of the changing context in which competition for rural housing occurs within the region.

Chapter Three focuses attention on the issue of housing itself. The chapter is divided into two main parts. It first considers the restructuring of housing provision within rural Wales by considering changing tenure patterns, housing costs and housing need within the region, again based on several published and unpublished statistical sources. The second part of the chapter considers the agency response to rural housing problems and focuses on the perception of housing problems, the agency response and the implementation of local needs housing policies within the Welsh countryside.

Chapter Four explores the impact of changes in socio-economic and housing restructuring in two case study areas of rural Wales. Based mainly on 1981 and 1991 Census data, the chapter aims to provide a context for the more detailed investigations of the rural housing market that follow.

Chapter Five examines state intervention within the private housing market by considering the provision and allocation of social rental housing within each study area. Attention is concentrated on the geography of provision, allocation procedures, groups

catered for, and the changing level of demand associated with both local authority and housing association rental housing.

Chapter Six shifts attention from the public to the private sector and considers the key agents involved in the provision and allocation of private sector housing for sale. The chapter is sub-divided into four main parts: housing production (builders); state intervention (the planning system); the financing of housing consumption (the building societies); and the exchange of housing (estate agents).

Based on a questionnaire survey of 400 households in the study areas, Chapter Seven investigates five aspects of the consumption of housing within the local housing market. The characteristics of households within the local housing market, the linkages between in-movement and housing and the interconnections between out-migration and the housing market and the incidence and nature of housing need are examined together with local attitudes towards further residential development and respondents' opinions of housing need.

Finally Chapter Eight brings together these pieces of the housing jigsaw in the form of a comprehensive summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE: APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF RURAL HOUSING

1.1 Introduction

"There has been a general neglect of rural housing issues, as a survey of any of the standard books on housing would reveal"

Phillips and Williams, 1982, p3

Eleven years have passed since David Phillips and Alan Williams commented on the paucity of studies addressing issues of rural housing relative to the abundance of research within the urban arena. However, such a statement is equally applicable to the situation in the early 1990s. Whilst, the 1980s witnessed a whole host of academic, policy and popular publications on rural housing issues, the 'cutting edge' of housing research steered clear of the rural arena. Indeed, with the odd recent exception, the study of housing in Britain's countryside has been largely atheoretical. Such a criticism, however, is not limited to studies of rural housing. Moseley (1980) and Cloke (1989) have suggested that rural studies generally have been slow to adopt more critical social theoretical approaches to the study of rural change.

According to Rogers (1987), in an important assessment of the state of rural housing research:

"rural housing followed in the pattern of many other aspects of the rural economy in showing a lag of about ten years or so behind the study of the same sector in the urban environment" (p147).

He argued that a balanced understanding of rural housing issues in England did not emerge until the middle of the 1970s. By the mid 1980s, however:



"there had been the accelerated romp through facets of study which were pioneered in an urban framework. Access, social justice, managerialism, and political economy approaches - all have by now been summarily touched on and the relevant flavour imported" (p147).

Whilst it is true to say that in the early 1990s we now have a clearer view of rural housing markets, there still remain significant gaps within the rural housing research conducted to date.

Rogers (1985) has referred to the study of rural housing as "an issue in search of a focus" (p87), in that until relatively recently, research had tended to concentrate on "small sectors of a barely-perceived set of problems" (Rogers, 1987, p147). As an illustration of this point, Rogers (1987) proposed a three-fold chronology of previous studies of rural housing:

[i] a period extending to the late 1940s - in which "housing was seen as a separate issue, but only as housing for rural workers and as a small factor of production within the agricultural sector" (p147-8).

[ii] a period from the late 1940s to the late 1960s - where rural housing was seldom considered except as the "taken-for-granted other side of residential land use" (p147).

In both these periods, the social implications of housing problems were rarely considered, other than in terms of the relationship between inadequate housing conditions and discontent amongst agricultural labourers.

[iii] Rogers' third phase, from the late 1960s onwards, represents a period of identifying certain popular issues and assuming that their circumstances represent the rural housing problem:

"thus, second homes briefly reigned from about 1968 to the early 1970s. Then the tied house in agriculture took over until the end of the decade. A brief flirtation with rural deprivation from about 1978 was given its housing component and then radical legislation in 1980 forced attention towards the public sector and the sale of rural council houses" (p148).

Since the publication of this chronology it is possible to add a further issue centred around issues of local needs and affordable housing. Furthermore, the last three years have witnessed an attempt to adapt aspects of general [urban] Weberian housing theory to the rural arena (Shucksmith, 1990a, 1990b).

However, even with this burgeoning literature on issues of rural housing, it still remains the case that researchers of rural housing:

"have been busily engaged upon making bricks but have given little regard to the eventual structure for which they should be used" (Rogers, 1987, p148).

There remains a need within rural housing research to consider this broader picture by purposely arranging the bricks so that a clearer understanding of the components of the rural housing market may be gleaned. Three aspects of rural housing research are considered in this chapter:

(i) a consideration of housing markets within a broader framework of economic restructuring and social recomposition affecting rural areas. Such an integrated approach to rural housing research has been suggested by the editors of a recent book concerned with housing research in rural Scotland:

"a fuller understanding [is required] of the inter-relationships between housing and rural economic development: there are rarely simple linkages" (MacGregor *et al.* 1987, pp.190-1).

The authors cited two examples of such complex linkages: firstly, counterurbanisation, which may be detrimental for certain groups in terms of access to housing, but may also revitalise rural communities through an in-movement of younger households with

children. Such an influx may "stimulate rural economic regeneration,...bolster school roles, and local spending would increase" (p191). However, an in-movement of 'outsiders' to rural areas may also produce adverse social and cultural effects, with elements within the newcomer group taking control of key community organisations - most notably in rural areas of Welsh-speaking Wales and Gaelic-speaking Scotland; second, tourism may represent a crucial component of the local economy, but its growth invariably removes housing from the local market. As MacGregor and Robinson (1987) have suggested:

"these are both part of the wider issue of the effect of housing on migration and local labour markets: lack of housing may cause out-migration and prevent in-migration with consequent effects on the quality and availability of particular skills in the labour force. These 'push and pull' effects differ from area to area" (p191).

(ii) Consideration also needs to be given to approaches to the study of housing developed within the urban arena and wider social theory. Relative to urban housing studies, little work has been undertaken which has considered the roles of institutions and gatekeepers within the rural housing market. Although Phillips and Williams (1982) set out to redress this perceived imbalance with a study of local authority housing managers, the role of key agents involved in the private housing market - such as builders, estate agents, building societies and private landlords - have remained untouched. Moreover, political economy approaches to the study of rural housing have been conspicuous by their absence, although they have been discussed briefly by Shucksmith (1990b). Such a situation contrasts with recent work which has examined economic restructuring and social recomposition within the countryside from a political economy perspective (Bradley and Lowe, 1984; Cloke, 1989; and Cater and Jones, 1990).

(iii) In terms of critical housing approaches, only Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b) has attempted to adapt housing theory formulated outside the rural arena to the study of housing markets in the British countryside. Shucksmith has investigated conflicts regarding additional housebuilding in rural areas by means of Weberian property class theory, and more specifically, by utilising the work of Saunders (1980, 1984) on domestic property classes. However, there has been very little empirical work which has examined these housing conflicts and domestic property classes within the countryside.

It is against this background that the current project is undertaken. Chapter One begins by considering the wider context of socio-economic change within the countryside. It then moves on to review some previous approaches to the study of rural housing, touching on the condition of and competition for rural housing. The review also considers recent work on rural housing conflict and classes by Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b). Recognising the value of Shucksmith's injection of [urban] housing theory into rural studies, the Chapter shifts the focus onto theoretical approaches and empirical studies of housing developed and conducted outside of the rural arena. Attention is given to issues of unequal access, institutions and gatekeepers, political economy approaches, and ongoing debates within the housing literature. Chapter One finishes by identifying a series of issues that warrant further attention, and which are subsequently explored in the main body of the thesis.

1.2 The wider context of socio-economic change in the countryside

The changing nature of both the rural economy and society has important consequences for the competition for housing in the countryside. In short, greater numbers of persons are attempting to gain entry into rural housing markets. Such an increase has resulted partly from in situ population growth, but mainly from high levels of net population in-movement that has taken place over the past decade. New groups are entering the countryside for a variety of reasons - retirement, commuting, holidays and employment.

It has been argued by several commentators - from Pahl⁽¹⁹⁶⁵⁾ onwards - that these incomer groups are characterised by relatively high income levels which enable them to outbid local residents, and by attitudes to the countryside which tend to favour constraint rather than further development (whether of a housing or economic nature). Alongside such population change has been a widescale growth in the rural economy, and whilst the reasons for such economic growth are contested, it can be suggested that it has resulted from wider processes of restructuring within capitalist production, as areas of the countryside are seen as receptive spaces for industrial relocation - offering cheap land, development grants and a compliant labour force. Accompanying this increase in the rural workforce has been considerable internal restructuring, as manufacturing and service industries have grown rapidly, and the traditional primary sector has shrunk. New jobs in these manufacturing and service sectors have predominantly involved women, with many men in the agricultural industry being made redundant. Thus, changes in the rural economy can be seen to have consequences within the rural social structure - bringing in new groups into the local economy and recomposing the existing social structure. This in turn has important consequences for the composition of groups within the rural housing market.

The following section discusses recent changes within the rural economy and society in greater detail, and reviews some recent research on the characteristics of and factors shaping such changes.

1.21 Population change and social recomposition

Champion and Watkins (1991) have commented on the importance of the repopulation of many rural areas in Britain.

"It is the resurgence of population growth in rural areas that constitutes the key symptom, if not the cause, of the fundamental changes that are now occurring in the countryside" (p7)

Population growth in 'remoter, mainly rural' areas was amongst the highest in England and Wales in the 1980s, extending the trend of rural repopulation first reported in the 1970s. Considerable debate ensued in the 1970s, when evidence of rural population increases began to emerge, concerning the mechanisms and likely permanence of such growth. However, in more recent years, several studies utilising both published Census material (Champion 1987) and individual surveys (Perry, Dean and Brown 1986; Bolton and Chalkley 1990; and Jones et al 1986) have concluded that population growth has continued into the 1980s, with some of the largest population rises reported in the remoter areas of the countryside.

Champion and Watkins (1991), in a review of recent studies of rural population change, have suggested that:

"rather than the 1970s turnaround being a temporary observation, rural areas have experienced a major long-term transformation into population growth that will merely be affected by cyclic factors associated particularly with the state of the national economy - as was the case during the recession period of the late 1970s and early 1980s" (p8)

Three recent investigations of population change and social recomposition in areas of the English and Scottish countryside by Bolton and Chalkley (1990) in North Devon, Lewis (1988) in the East Midlands, and Jones (1987) in northern Scotland allow a synoptic overview of these changes.

Clearly it is difficult to summarise the main findings of three comprehensive studies of rural population trends in such a short space. However, what can be stated is that each has demonstrated that rural areas have witnessed considerable demographic and social change in recent years. In simple terms, for the reality is much more complex, the rural areas under review have experienced a net in-movement of predominantly middle-class, higher income households, whilst simultaneously 'losing' many of their younger residents. In terms of the age structure of newcomer groups, the Bolton and Chalkley (1990) and Jones (1987) studies discovered an in-movement of relatively young persons, whilst Lewis (1988) reported 'a recent in-movement of mature-aged, middle-class families and retired elderly households'. What is clear, however, is that both the motivations for in- and out-movement, and the characteristics of movers vary from place to place. For example, in terms of in-movement, an obvious distinction can be made between the pressurised countryside surrounding the major conurbations and the remoter rural areas. In-movement to the former area may be dominated by commuting, whilst in the latter, retirement in-migration may play a more important role. This said, newcomers to the British countryside must be seen as a heterogeneous group, exhibiting as much internal variations as differences between themselves and 'locals'. As Bolton and Chalkley (1990) have suggested:

"we are therefore faced with the problem of a reality which seems too complex and diverse to be accommodated into a single theoretical framework. And if this were true when set simply against the North Devon experience, it must be still more pertinent if we consider the wide range of contrasting geographical and cultural contexts within which the turnaround has proceeded" (p42-3)

1.22 Demographic and social change in rural Wales

There has been a paucity of studies addressing issues of social change within rural Wales in recent years, in marked contrast to the wealth of information that emanated from a series of community studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s. For this reason, this section draws mainly from a recent paper by Day (1989) which examined the reasons behind and consequences of processes of in-movement.

Whilst, in many respects, the population turnaround in rural Wales can be viewed as a 'considerable success story', Day has suggested that:

"there has been growing public discussion and concern about the 'crisis' facing the Welsh countryside, especially with regard to the impact of large-scale population movement" (1989, p137)

According to Day, in-migration can be viewed either as an 'enrichment', an injection of new ideas, or as a process characterised by cultural dilution due to the dominance of English, middle-class, middle-to-high income households. With regard to this latter viewpoint, Day considered that considerable social and cultural tensions might result, with:

"many more issues in rural areas...likely to become the bones of contention, as diverse sections of the population pursue their differing objectives; a variety of 'sectoral' struggles and conflicts will arise...Groups with differing investments and interests in rural living confront one another with rival conceptions of what is economically and socially desirable" (ibid., p155)

Examples of such contentious issues include - second homes; marina developments; the spread of bungalow developments into the remote countryside; new tourist attractions; and, most importantly, the future of the Welsh language. However, such conflicts will not be uniform across all areas of rural Wales:

"it is important to emphasize that these processes have distinct impacts on different localities: because particular groups tend to gravitate towards certain locations seen as those which offer the specific things they find attractive, we find individual communities facing very varied futures" (p156)

Day cited the work of Morgan (1981) in Tregaron and Newtown in the 1970s to illustrate this point:

"the former, mainly Welsh speaking, town was losing productive population, such as young professionals in career moves, and young manual households looking for employment; whereas, the latter, which is predominantly English speaking, was at the same time attracting economically active migrants" (p156)

Day considered that considerable research was required examining this internal diversity and the differing fortunes of communities within rural Wales. He argued that there existed a need to go beyond the broad-scale statistics, and look at how these processes work themselves out 'on the ground' (p157):

"sadly, almost nothing has been done to generate the kind of 'case study' material that could flesh out general arguments offered here or illuminate the way in which the various elements of the population negotiate their way through all the ensuing local repercussions...At the very least, it seems vital to ensure that more research is carried out to document what may prove to be a decisive moment of change in the Welsh countryside..." (p157-8)

1.23 Employment change in the countryside

"Given that only a relatively small proportion of recent population growth in most of rural Britain can be accounted for by retirement migration and also that only certain parts are readily accessible to larger urban centres for commuting, it is not surprising that recent trends in population have been closely paralleled by overall patterns of employment change"
(Champion and Watkins, 1991, p9)

Rural Britain has witnessed considerable economic restructuring in recent years. In general terms, the primary sector has experienced a continued contraction of its workforce, whilst the manufacturing, and particularly the service sectors have witnessed considerable growth in their rural employment levels. Overall, the vast majority of rural areas recorded economic growth across the 1980s, although some areas, for a variety of reasons, have represented more receptive spaces for the investment of new and relocation of existing economic activity. This said, such economic restructuring has not solved existing employment problems present within many areas of the countryside - problems relating to low wages, restrictive job opportunities, the seasonal nature of some employment, and poor public transport provision.

In a recent review of employment change in the British countryside, Townsend (1991) has suggested that many rural areas were well suited to benefit from national and international economic restructuring:

"not only were these areas, for environmental reasons, attractive destinations for urban migrants and investment but their bias towards self-employment and scope for greater employment of women also gave them a potential advantage in relation to the general trends of the 1980s" (p86)

In many ways, recent processes of employment change within the countryside have mirrored those taking place in Britain as a whole: shifts from manual to non-manual work; male to female workers; full-time to part-time work; from primary and secondary

employment to services; permanent to temporary work; and from employee-based to self-employed (Townsend 1991).

Townsend has considered recent employment change across three sectors of the rural economy, based on information from the Censuses of Employment:

The primary sector - between 1981-87, rural counties witnessed a reduction of one in eight primary sector jobs, which represented a loss of 19% in agriculture, forestry and fishing employment and a fall of 11% within energy and water industries. However, within these aggregate statistics considerable geographical, gender and work-type variations have been reported (see Clark 1991, Marks 1989, Gasson 1989 and Whatmore 1988);

Manufacturing - urban-to-rural manufacturing shifts across the 1970s were first reported by Fothergill and Gudgin (1979). By 1987, Townsend (1991) had calculated that around 22% of employees in rural Britain were engaged in the manufacturing sector, only slightly below the British average of 24%. Such a finding led Townsend to comment that:

"we can say that rural areas are barely less industrialised than the rest of post-industrial Britain!" (ibid., p90)

Whilst factory employment in rural areas fell across the 1980s, such losses were at much lower rates than those recorded in other areas of Britain. Townsend has suggested that such a phenomenon may be related to the activities of rural development bodies and their policies of providing advance factory units and offering generous grants to relocating companies;

Services - Townsend suggested that rural areas are now only slightly less dependent on the service sector than Britain as a whole:

"what is more, many rural areas have been sharing fully in the dynamics of service employment growth of the 1980s" (p92)

In the 'remoter, mainly rural' districts, Townsend calculated a 14% increase in service employment between 1981-87, with greatest proportional growth levels recorded by the 'banking and finance' sub-sector. Such increases were also geographically uneven, with highest growth levels recorded in southern rural areas of England.

In considering such employment changes within the British countryside, Townsend felt able to conclude that:

"in whatever way we define rural areas, when we take the picture of all sectors together, we find strong employment growth, which is generally not attributable to these areas' mix of growing and declining sectors...

The striking feature coming out of this analysis, then, is that the rural areas turn out to be a leading part of Britain for the national swing towards the female and part-time forms of employment, albeit starting from lower levels than the rest of the country" (1991, p93)

1.24 Political economy approaches: attempts to explain the changing employment and societal structure of rural areas

Whilst most rural commentators are in general agreement about the population and economic changes reported above, there exists considerable divergence regarding the mechanisms underpinning this restructuring. As was noted earlier, Bolton and Chalkley (1990) have argued that no single overarching theory can explain recent population movements to the British countryside. However, one such explanation of economic restructuring and social recomposition affecting rural Britain has been proposed by a set of researchers who have adopted a political economy approach.

At the core of such an approach is the notion of the centrality of capital accumulation as the driving force behind social formation:

"changes in rural employment structures are central to any understanding of the reality of rural social life. On the one hand, they reflect profound shifts in the nature of capitalist production and, more specifically, the widely differing impacts of these shifts on different types of locality. On the other, employment changes themselves have resulted in radical development in terms of rural class structures, gender divisions, the forms of political conflict occurring in rural areas and, indeed, of the complex processes by which 'rural cultures' are produced and reproduced" (Rees, 1984, p27)

In crude terms, capital accumulation involves the continuous conversion of a portion of surplus value expropriated by the capitalist from the workers into additional capital - in the form of labour or fixed capital and raw materials. This 'continuous process of reinvestment' (Cloke, 1989, p181) is periodically stalled by barriers to further accumulation, with production having to be restructured in order that accumulation can continue. Such restructuring can take many forms: new production methods; reduced labour costs; new methods of labour control; extension of markets; or relocation of production to a 'more favourable location' (Cloke, 1989, p181). With regard to this last element of restructuring, Bradley and Lowe (1984) have suggested that, in its monopoly phase, capital is becoming less constrained by space, and as such, more mobile. Thus, capital is able to relocate in order to utilise 'cheap and compliant labour reserves' (p11), many of which exist in rural areas. However, labour has remained relatively immobile, and so capital relocation has resulted in new forms of recomposition and conflict within rural society:

"whole new class groupings are being introduced into rural areas; the traditional roles of men and women are being broken down; whole groups of workers are becoming marginalised from the economic mainstream in unemployment and are evolving new methods of 'making out' in the informal economy. All these changes, in turn, are being reflected in new cultural forms and new types of political conflict" (Rees, 1984, p41)

However, such restructuring has not taken place in a societal vacuum, rather it has occurred in:

"localities with differing histories, class compositions and social characters generally. Such differences are, in one sense, the products of the accumulation process. Equally, however, they shape the direction and pattern of the accumulation process" (Rees, 1984, p32)

Here, Rees is building on Massey's (1978) notion of the 'geological metaphor', in which capital investment in a particular locality is viewed as a series of strata laid down over time, with the combination of layers signifying a "form of mutual determination...with each role of the process affecting the other" (Gregory, 1989, p76). In this sense, the generation of 'rural localities' can be seen as "the outcome of the use of space by particular fractions of capital" (Rees, 1984, p33).

1.3 Previous studies of rural housing

The previous section attempted to provide a broader context into which the study of rural housing could be placed. It considered how changes within both the rural economy and society could be seen to play an important part in influencing the intensity and nature of competition for housing in the countryside. This section reviews some of the key previous studies of rural housing, and identifies inadequacies within the existing literature. It is suggested that one way of plugging some of the 'gaps' within the rural housing literature involves a journey into housing research conducted outside of the rural arena. To this end, the Chapter then moves across the rural/urban divide and considers aspects of general [urban] housing theory that could be usefully adapted within the study of housing within the countryside.

1.31 The condition of rural housing

"It is wrongly assumed that slums do not exist in the countryside and the rose-covered cottage myth is partly to blame for this false assumption"(Gilg, 1985, p61).

Until the 1960s problems associated with rural housing in Britain were synonymous with inadequate housing conditions. However, dramatic improvements throughout the twentieth century in part the result of legislation, but mainly due to increased private sector investment led Rogers to comment in 1976 that:

"rural house conditions now generate relatively little concern" (p85)

By 1987, however, Rogers had reconsidered this viewpoint on the basis of two main factors: firstly, the English House Condition Survey of 1981 had recorded almost 7% of the English rural housing stock as unfit compared to only 5% five years earlier, an increase of over 40 000 unfit properties and a rate of unfitness that was higher than that

recorded for the English conurbations; and secondly, a significant proportion of unfit dwellings were occupied by households on low incomes, and who were experiencing accessibility difficulties - households which Shaw (1979) described as multiply deprived. As such, Rogers argued that, without public resources, these households would be unable to afford to improve their properties, and so the number of unfit dwellings would remain at this level in the immediate future.

1.32 Improvement of the rural housing stock

Efforts to improve the state of rural housing in England and Wales were initiated in the inter-war period with the passing of 16 Acts of Parliament concerned with housing, and a further 10 Acts which dealt with rents (Pacione, 1984, p219). In the 1919-43 period, 870 000 properties were constructed in rural areas of England and Wales - representing a 50% increase in the rural housing stock. The vast majority of such new housebuilding involved the private sector (over 700 000 properties), although rural district and county councils contributed around 164 000 additional houses. Whilst private building companies dominated new constructions by a rate of over four-to-one, this period witnessed, for the first time, the large-scale establishment of public housing within the countryside. As Dunn, Rawson and Rogers (1981) have commented:

"for the first time public housing was introduced into the countryside in significant numbers in many cases and often only the smallest villages failed to get their quota" (p33)

However, Rogers (1976) has pointed out that such increased rural housing provision was at a much lower rate than that constructed in urban areas. Furthermore, in some rural areas - most notably in the rural counties of Wales, the South West and parts of East Anglia - a majority of local authorities implemented no public sector house building programmes in the inter-war period. New private sector housing was also concentrated in peri-urban rural areas - in the expanding suburbs of the major conurbations - and

involved speculative builders taking advantage of cheap land and less restrictive planning regulations (Pacione, 1984). As such, these developments tended to satisfy the demands of the more affluent urban or sub-urban population rather than cater for the needs of 'traditional' rural residents.

Alongside this increased level of housing provision, housing legislation attempted to improve the condition of the existing rural housing stock, and alleviate problems associated with overcrowding in the countryside. In the 1919-43 period, it has been estimated that almost 30 000 rural properties were demolished and an additional 22 000 dwellings renovated (Rogers, 1976, p92). By 1944, the Third report of the Rural Housing Sub-Committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee felt able to praise the substantial efforts of many local authorities in the housing field. However, the Committee also reported that other authorities - particularly those with relatively small populations and low rateable values, and including many Welsh authorities - had made little effort to improve housing conditions within their areas, and had made little or no use of available grants and subsidies.

Whilst there is no denying the considerable achievements achieved in this inter-war period, a survey of housing conditions in the countryside on the eve of the Second World War discovered that:

"about one-third of all rural dwellings were not yet served by electricity, and no more than one-tenth of farmhouses were served in this respect. at the same time at least a million rural dwellers did not have the benefit of piped water...and over 5000 parishes were lacking sewerage systems" (quoted in Rogers, 1976, p94).

In the immediate post-1945 period, rural housing problems became absorbed within national programmes of reconstruction. As Rogers (1976) has pointed out:

"subsequent concern for problems of rural housing has been subsumed within the general problem of the nation's housing. With justification perhaps, the problems of inner city areas, of urban slum clearance and of housing conditions of 90% of the population, have tended to take attention away from the problems of housing in rural areas. Poor housing conditions still exist in the countryside, but the focus of political concern is urban rather than rural" (p96).

In addition, the Town and Country Planning Act, introduced in 1947 dramatically reduced the level of housebuilding within the countryside, and particularly the open countryside. Such restrictions, together with the fact that 'inadequate' housing conditions now affect only a small minority of rural households, has had the effect of shifting the focus of rural housing research away from the physical conditions of housing and more towards a concern with unequal competition for a limited pool of housing in the countryside. As Rogers (1976) has pointed out:

"new rural housing problems are frequently caused by increased wealth rather than deprivation. Rural houses are desirable goods, rather than damning indictments of the rural economy, have tended to provide the focus of housing problems in the post-war situation...rural housing problems...are more often those involving social equity and privilege than questions of poor sanitation and overcrowding" (p96-7).

1.33 Competition for rural housing

Competition for housing in the countryside has always been unequal, with certain groups, and particular individuals within groups "better placed to obtain the housing they want" (Phillips and Williams, 1984, p97). However, as increased numbers of ex-[sub]urban residents began to move into previously constituted rural areas - as commuters, retirees and leisure home owners - and the supply of such housing became restricted by the planning system, so the competition for housing in the countryside intensified. Further,

not only did the level of competition increase, but the nature of this competition began to alter, as elements of the higher income urban population relocated to rural areas.

1.34 Typologies of groups within the housing market

Evidence of 'new' groups moving to the peri-urban countryside in the 1960s began to attract the interest of several researchers in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Pahl, 1966; Thorns, 1968; Ambrose, 1974). Academic attention focused on the classification of social groupings in these dynamic accessible rural communities. Two such typologies (Pahl, 1966 and Ambrose, 1974) have important implications for rural housing and, as such, warrant further study:

(i) Pahl, in a study of social change in metropolitan villages surrounding London, proposed that eight social groups could be identified in respect to housing. Pahl argued that income and housing tenure represented the two main axes of stratification, with the motivation for living in the village playing a more minor role. For example, he differentiated between persons intending to spend a considerable period of time in the village (retired, salaried in-migrants) and those merely 'passing through' (career-oriented spiralists).

Pahl's (1966) typology

- i large property owners
- ii salaried immigrants with own capital
- iii spiralists
- iv persons with limited income or capital
- v retired
- vi council house tenants
- vii tied cottagers and other tenants
- viii local tradespeople and owners of small businesses

(ii) Ambrose (1974) in a study of social change in the Sussex village of Ringmer since the 1870s identified seven "rough groupings of households...based on general observation rather than empirical data" (p201). The typology is similar to Pahl's in that it stressed the importance of ownership of capital or income in determining access to different tenures. Ambrose also included car ownership in his classification, since a lack of private transport restricted the choice of housing location. Ambrose argued that groups (ii) and (vii) were often forced to live outside the village owing to a lack of suitable properties within its boundaries, and that due to 'spatial sorting', villages such as Ringmer tended to be made up of:

"households in categories (iii) and (v) who are mutually similar in their life-cycle stage, and their access to private transport, but who differ in the crucial respect of tenure" (p202)

Ambrose's (1974) typology

- i those who have capital, can afford a house of 'character' and can run two cars
- ii those who can afford a four-bedroom house and can run a car
- iii those who can afford a three- or two-bedroom 'semi' (or could until the 1972 price rises) and can run a car
- iv those in a similar situation who cannot run a car
- v those who cannot afford to purchase but whose situation enables them to gain a council house and who can run a car
- vi those in a similar situation but who cannot run a car
- vii those who cannot afford to purchase, cannot get a council house and who live in privately rented accommodation

Each typology has been criticised for its omission of important rural social groups. Pacione (1984), for example, noted that Pahl's typology ignored second home owners, mobile home dwellers, people living in winter lets and members of the armed forces in

rented accommodation. Furthermore, Pacione has argued that Pahl's typology was too geographically specific and, as such, could not easily be extended to other rural areas of Britain. Whilst both these criticisms are valid, it should be noted that Ambrose and Pahl recognised the crudity of their classifications and suggested that each should be treated merely as indicative of social groupings within specific localities in the South East of England at a particular moment in time.

A third typology of groups in competition for housing in the countryside was developed by Dunn, Rawson and Rogers in 1981. Described by Gilg (1985) as "the most comprehensive survey of rural housing yet undertaken" (p61), the study employed a complex multivariate analysis of 1971 Census socio-economic data to derive seven rural housing profiles:

- i agricultural - farmworkers
- ii agricultural - farmers
- iii owner-occupiers - retired
- iv transitional rural
- v owner-occupiers - high status
- vi armed forces
- vii local authority housing

According to the authors, these seven housing profiles acknowledged:

"the transition from the old established housing types based on the agricultural economy, through the retired sector to the urban-oriented owner-occupiers who had progressively invaded the accessible countryside. In between there were the important retiring groups represented by the tenants of local authorities and the armed services" (p245).

Dunn *et al* recognised an important distinction between owners and non-owners of domestic property, arguing that:

"from whatever viewpoint the position is assessed (housing quality, accessibility, household circumstances, capital asset) the dominant position of the owner-occupier is clear" (p247)

They admitted, however, that there existed two main exceptions to this owner/tenant dichotomy: first, tenant farmers - whose security of tenure placed them on an equal footing with owner-occupiers; and second, mobile home owners - who represented owner-occupiers for whom the benefits of property ownership appeared less important. The authors also acknowledged that owner-occupiers represented an extremely heterogeneous group, with many lower income owners unable to adequately repair their property, and whose asset was depreciating relative to higher valued, better maintained dwellings. Notwithstanding these caveats, Dunn *et al* contended that:

"tenants have become a residual minority and the gulf between them and house-owners has increased as rural wages have declined relative to urban and professional salaries and as house prices have spiralled ever upward. All groups have found themselves increasingly in an environment of competition for rural houses, but only for some has there been also a substantial element of housing choice" (p249).

As well as stressing the importance of housing tenure as a key aspect of social stratification in rural England (for the study omitted Wales and Scotland), the study also highlighted geographical variations in housing structures between what might be termed pressurised peripheral rural areas and the more remote countryside. For example, the more 'rural' areas - Northern England, the Welsh borders, South-West England - were characterised by higher proportions of households engaged in agriculture and above average rates of retired owner-occupiers. In the more pressurised, 'peri-urban' areas, there existed higher proportions of higher income owner-occupiers, increased employment opportunities, improved housing quality and greater provision of local authority housing.

These three rural housing typologies - Pahl (1966), Ambrose (1974) and Dunn *et al* (1988) have been criticised recently by Shucksmith (1990b) who has argued that they are merely concerned with housing outcomes rather than housing interest groups and conflict. In short, Shucksmith has suggested that these typologies involve housing status groups rather than domestic property classes. Having made such a criticism, Shucksmith nevertheless recognised the contribution of such research:

"despite the shortcomings of the rural housing profile approach, it is valuable in so far as it suggests the importance of migration and tenure related dimensions in understanding rural society" (p77)

Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b) proposed a fourth rural housing typology based on the differing housing consumption opportunities available to different social groups, and linked closely to the work of Saunders (1984). In brief, Saunders argued that housing tenure was neither the basis for or expression of class formations, but was rather, the 'single most pertinent factor in the determination of consumption sector cleavages' (p207). Housing should be viewed as playing a key role in affecting life chances, expressing social status and also, due to the relative financial benefits of owner-occupation, exacerbating socio-economic inequalities. As Shucksmith (1990) has pointed out:

"if housing classes are identified in relation to consumption, the criteria most germane to a typology are those which most strongly influence an individual's or a household's chances of gaining access to housing" (p79)

According to Saunders, the key criterion determining access to housing markets is ownership of capital and level of income. Clearly, higher incomes allow households the chance of entering into owner-occupation, whilst the ownership of capital - usually domestic property - permits movement through the housing market and provides the opportunity of realising the value of the asset. Whilst Shucksmith recognised that not all owner-occupiers were in the same financial position, he nevertheless maintained that

their housing consumption opportunities are much greater than those available to non-owners. Households without access to capital and earning low, irregular incomes are forced to rely on the rented housing sector, which means, in most cases, private rented accommodation, unless the household is able to satisfy the strict allocation criteria for social housing. Thus, such households, according to Saunders (1984), can be seen as having restricted housing consumption opportunities. Shucksmith further contended that future consumption opportunities were also influenced by a household's present housing tenure. For example, a council tenant, in many cases, has the theoretical choice of becoming an owner-occupier, whilst a person owning their own home would find it difficult to move into social housing. Thus, in Shucksmith's typology the main factors determining who can afford to buy, and who is forced to rely on the rented sector were income/capital and existing tenure. This said, he also recognised that motivations for living in the area varied between different types of rural resident - retirement in-movers, leisure home owners, commuters, and persons constrained by their place of employment. Regarding this latter group, Shucksmith suggested that:

"households tied to a particular workplace within the rural area will have a more restricted pool of dwellings from which to draw, compared to groups seeking no particular locality but a generally more attractive rural environment. The lack of a car would emphasise this difference" (p80)

It was also argued that stage in the life-cycle played a part in determining housing consumption opportunities, with young single persons and childless couples finding it increasingly difficult to gain access to the social housing sector.

Shucksmith's (1990a, 1990b) housing typology

A. Low income, low wealth

- i young households, often young couples and single persons from the immediate area, unable to buy into home ownership and denied access to council housing through insufficient points. This group tends to have to seek private rented accommodation, winter lets and mobile homes, or share with their parents.
- ii other tenants of private rented housing and tied accommodation, often in low paid, traditional rural occupations. Members of this group may be trapped in inadequate housing, with little prospect of being allocated a council house or of finding another private tenancy.
- iii pensioners, either retired from local employment or erstwhile retirement migrants who may face difficulties due to increased living costs and accessibility problems. Members of this group could be in any tenure, and often seek greater support perhaps from a move to be nearer relatives or services, or from access to amenity or sheltered housing. While they enjoy the accumulative benefits of owner-occupation, they also may find difficulty in maintaining their home, and so its value.
- iv reluctant commuters, according to Pahl (1966) may have been forced to live at a distance from their urban workplace by an inability to purchase a suitable house in town. Nevertheless they will gain from the increase in their home's value, and this then will widen their options.
- v local authority tenants are a small but relatively fortunate class compared to these other groups. However, their rents have recently risen considerably, and they may have had to leave their preferred locality in order to secure a council house in a nearby town. they will be eligible to buy their houses at a discount, and so gain access to the accumulative potential of owner-occupation.

B. More prosperous groups

- vi indigenous owner-occupiers, tradesmen [sic], farmers and landowners have a considerable choice within the owner-occupied sector. They also share a proclivity for attempting to prevent further housing development, thus inflating their own property values and maintaining a low-wage economy (Newby *et al.* 1978).
- vii retirement migrants and 'pastoral migrants' will have ready capital available from the sale of their previous home, probably in an urban area, and will therefore enjoy a wide choice in the owner-occupied sector. They will also want to protect their property values, and the rural environment, by opposing new development. However, they are less likely to be tied to any particular locality.
- viii holiday home buyers will have a similar desire to preserve the rural environment and their property's value, but are likely to have less capital at their disposal for the purchase of rural housing (having a main home to finance as well). They may therefore

compete to some extent with low income, low wealth groups for the cheaper end of the owner-occupied market.

ix commuters (other than reluctant commuters) choose to live in a rural environment, rather than in a particular community, and again have a vested interest in restricting development and so increasing the value of their property. However, they are constrained to live at an acceptable distance from their urban workplaces. In common with groups (vi) and (vii), they will have a wide choice within the owner-occupied sector.

Shucksmith (1990b) has warned that this typology should not be viewed as 'rigid or universal' and might need modifications in its application to other areas of the British countryside. However, he maintains that:

"...the criteria adopted for distinguishing housing classes - income/wealth, present tenure, life-cycle status and motives for residing in the rural area - will remain relevant and form the basis of any amended typology" (p82).

1.35 Domestic property classes

As has been stated previously, the four typologies referred to above are based on housing consumption groups, and as such, focus on differential access to housing consumption. Shucksmith has also attempted to highlight the interests underlying conflict over housing development in rural areas.

"Rural housing consumption groups are useful as a convenient way of highlighting differential outcomes amongst those competing for access to rural housing, and in focusing on the processes through which rural housing is allocated. Domestic property classes are more helpful in understanding the conflicting interests which lie behind policies of urban containment and housing supply restriction and which therefore act to structure rural housing opportunities" (1990a, p227)

In addition to the derivation of a series of housing consumption groups, Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b) has produced a typology of rural housing classes concerned with the

conflicting and competing interests associated with the ownership of domestic property. This typology, like the previous, is based on the work of Saunders (1980) on domestic property classes and the accumulative potential of property ownership. Such an approach places at its core the 'inherent' conflict between the owners and non-owners of domestic property over further residential development in the countryside.

"Such an approach assumes that anti-growth interests in the countryside are essentially production-related rather than consumption-related; in that their opposition to new development derives from a defence of property values rather than of lifestyle and status" (ibid., p227)

Saunders (1980) proposed a three-fold classification of housing classes: private capital; owner-occupiers; and non-owners. He argued that, due to the accumulative potential of property ownership, owner-occupiers represented a 'middle property class' whose interests may align with either the private capital or non-owning classes depending on the issue in question. Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b) has discussed the interests of these property classes in a rural context:

[1] The private capital class is involved both in the supply of housing and the facilitation of services involved in its supply and distribution. According to Saunders, the primary objective of this class is profit maximisation. This said, the private capital class was extremely differentiated, with four main groups identifiable:

- [i] *finance capital* - providing financial resources for property purchase, construction and improvement;
- [ii] *industrial capital* - engaged in house building;
- [iii] *commercial capital* - estate agents, solicitors and surveyors - the exchange professionals;
- [iv] *landed capital* - landowners and private landlords.

Shucksmith (1990b) has discussed the interests of these four strata, and their potential for conflict within a rural context.

In terms of industrial capital, he argued that housebuilders desire a sufficient level of land release at regular intervals to maintain their demand predictions and a stable level of operation. Restrictive planning regulations, therefore, will conflict with the interests of builders, in that they reduce the release of land and introduce uncertainties into business plans for builders and developers. As Herrington (1984) has pointed out:

"housing developers regard planning constraints as a barrier to be overcome before their own plans can be brought to fruition. If it were not for these restrictions housebuilders could build wherever they liked. They see planning as restrictive and negative. It also makes it difficult for them to anticipate when land will be available, and it creates uncertainties during the interval between land purchase and construction" (p33)

Regarding commercial and financial capital, Shucksmith felt unable to cite any examples of their interests operating in the British countryside. Instead, he quoted Williams' (1976) study of the Islington housing market as an illustration of urban gentrification, and the role of estate agents and building societies in encouraging a faster turnover and price rises within the property market, so that commissions and mortgage repayment levels could be maximised. Extending the findings of this study to the rural arena, Shucksmith speculated that both commercial and finance capital would tend to favour restrictions on new housebuilding, given that such restrictions would increase property prices and attract wealthy owner-occupiers.

Finally, the interests of landed capital, in Shucksmith's view, were less clear, since planning restrictions might favour those owners of land that contained planning permission, but discriminate against those landowners in non-designated areas.

Shucksmith (1990b) suggested that the interests of these sub-groups within the finance class were very much divided, concluding that:

"on balance, then, the interests of property suppliers are likely to be divided in relation to the construction of new housing in the countryside. Where their profits depend upon the supply of new housing, as for housebuilders and the owner of the land in question, their interests would be served by releasing land for new housebuilding; however, other elements of capital will gain most by the protection of the rural environment and the consequent increase in the price of existing housing" (p68)

In Saunders' second property class - owner-occupiers - Shucksmith considered that its interests "in relation to new housebuilding in rural areas are quite unambiguous" (p69). Since home owners have a vested interest in the capital accumulation of their property, they will tend to benefit from restrictions on the supply of new housing, since such restrictions will increase property prices. Such an interest, it is argued, is shared by all owner-occupiers - outright owners, mortgagees, locals and newcomers.

Shucksmith attempted to assess critically attitudes held by newcomers towards housebuilding within the British countryside from the viewpoint of Saunders' property class typology. Newcomers' general opposition to further housing (and general) developments in rural areas has been widely discussed, both in academic and popular arenas. The term NIMBY syndrome was coined, with Herrington (1984, p148) using the metaphor of the drawbridge closing behind affluent in-migrants as they move into their idyllic rural castles to describe newcomer attitudes to further residential development in rural areas. Shucksmith questioned such a viewpoint, and asked whether such opposition to new housing development represented "a defence of lifestyle or a reflection of domestic property class" (p69). Shucksmith borrowed two viewpoints from Herrington (1984) to illustrate this lifestyle / property class confusion: firstly, Herrington argued that people who value their environment and the privacy and social exclusivity of their

lifestyle will try to restrict others from destroying the status quo; on the other hand, the demand for such a lifestyle, together with such a restrictive supply of housing in many rural areas, will induce increases in property prices, and thus increase the accumulative potential of their home. Studies by Buller and Lowe (1982) in Suffolk and Short *et al* (1987) in Berkshire seemed to indicate that concerns about the impact of further residential development on property prices played an important role in the anti-development ethos. Furthermore, both pieces of research showed that anti-development groups were dominated by owner-occupiers. This said, it could also be argued that defence of lifestyle plays as important a part in housing opposition as protection of a property's accumulative potential. As Shucksmith has pointed out, the main difficulty facing the housing researcher is that:

"it is hard to distinguish this [domestic property] class orientation empirically from status groups organising to protect their privileged lifestyles..." (1990b, p70)

This said, Shucksmith appeared convinced of the causality of domestic property classes, and concluded that:

"anti-development interests may therefore be viewed from this perspective as essentially domestic propertied interests" (ibid., p71).

Whilst accepting that the ownership or non-ownership of domestic property play an important part in determining attitudes to further housing development in rural areas, it must be stressed that there exist other equally important factors at play. As Short *et al* (1987) concluded in their Berkshire study, the voice of persons opposed to new development is:

"the voice of middle-class, middle-aged, owner-occupiers seeking to protect their physical and social environments" (p37)

The final property class advanced by Saunders (1980) is that of the non-owner of domestic property. Saunders argued that since such people are not directly affected by fluctuations in property prices, then their attitudes towards new housing development will differ from that of owner-occupiers. Thus, it can be argued that non-owners will not express such strong feelings of anti-development within rural areas. On the contrary, Shucksmith argued that this housing class would be in favour of additional private housebuilding, since more housing would depress prices and so help make owner-occupation a more realistic option. In addition, public sector tenants would benefit from increased provision of 'social housing', and private tenants would gain most from schemes providing 'low-cost' housing or 'affordable' private rental accommodation.

This said, it has been suggested that non-owners, like the previous two property classes, do not constitute a homogeneous group. For example, many council house tenants have the theoretical 'right' to purchase their own home at a substantial discount, and so could be classified as potential owners as well as current non-owners. Furthermore, the argument of Saunders and Shucksmith can be criticised in that it is assumed that non-owners would not object to additional housebuilding on lifestyle grounds - spoiling the landscape, attracting the wrong types of people to the area.

Whilst, in many ways, recognising that these three domestic property classes were far from homogeneous, and indeed may contain the potential for internal conflict, Shucksmith nevertheless maintained that a 'Weberian typology of domestic property classes' provided a useful key to understanding conflicts surrounding new development in the British countryside.

One of the more interesting parts of Saunders' (1980) paper - which proposed these domestic property classes - was that the author finished with a demolition of his own trichotomy. However, subsequent authors have risen to Saunders' defence, arguing that

his level of self-criticism was not justified and suggesting that housing divisions based on tenure did, in fact, constitute distinct property classes (Pratt, 1982). Regarding such criticisms, Shucksmith (1990b) has argued that:

"...in a rural context Saunders' self-criticisms seem even less substantial, and that the concept of domestic property classes may usefully be applied to rural housing notwithstanding" (p72)

Shucksmith reconsidered the three most important criticisms advanced by Saunders and attempted to shed some rays of rural light on to each:

- (i) Firstly, Saunders argued that his approach depended on the continuation of a set of specific conditions - namely the fact that property values would continue to rise above the general rate of inflation, and so represent a real capital investment. If such conditions were to change, then the basis for the typology would no longer exist. Shucksmith attempted to counter this argument with two further points: firstly, given the presence of a rigid planning structure within the British countryside, there would remain continual conflict over land release for new housing development; and second, that the 'rate of land release for housebuilding, [the primary determinant of real house price in rural areas] may be strongly influenced by the opposing classes' (1990b, p73). Thus, for Shucksmith, the domestic property class typology in the context of the rural arena 'does not rely on unduly specific external conditions' (ibid., p73).

- (ii) The second main self-criticism advanced by Saunders related to the fact that whilst he felt able to demonstrate a class conflict between housing suppliers and property owners and between housing suppliers and non-owners, he could not establish such a conflict between owners and non-owners of domestic property. Shucksmith argued, however, that in rural areas:

"the conflict over land release for housebuilding, and therefore over house prices and rents, necessarily places home owners and non-owners in material opposition to one another. Restrictions on development increase the exchange value of home owners' property while increasing rent levels, reducing the supply of homes to rent, and further limiting accessibility to owner-occupation" (ibid., p73)

(iii) Saunders' final major criticism of his own typology, and one repeated in a later paper (Saunders, 1984), related to the problem of integrating housing into a strict class-based analysis. In brief, Saunders argued that housing could not be integrated into class theory. In reply to this criticism, Shucksmith turned to the work of Pratt (1982) who argued that relationships between domestic property classes and classes based on the means of production were "open and empirical ones" (p493). On this basis, and with the characteristics of the British countryside, Shucksmith felt able to dismiss this third criticism, stating that:

"it is clear empirically that in rural areas there is a close relationship between acquisition classes and domestic property classes. Access to home ownership depends upon either wealth or access to credit, which in turn, depends on size and predictability of income. Owner-occupiers in rural areas are predominantly professional and non-manual workers (Rogers 1983) or people retired from these acquisition classes. Nevertheless, access to home ownership and associated capital accumulation is not determined solely by labour market power: other relevant factors...include life-cycle stage and inherited wealth (Dunn et al 1981). For this reason domestic property classes and acquisition classes, although closely related, maybe seen as analytically distinct" (1990b, p73)

Whilst Shucksmith's (1990a, 1990b) attempt to theorise rural housing conflict in terms of domestic property classes represents a relatively new and potentially exciting facet of rural housing studies, a more pragmatic response to the changing nature of competition for housing in the countryside has been the development of local needs housing policies within many areas of the Welsh (and English) countryside. The next section considers academic discussion of such local needs housing schemes - the development of schemes, the definition of 'need', their success and ethical basis.

1.4 Local Needs Housing

The increased level and changing nature of competition for housing in the countryside, together with restrictions placed on the supply of such housing has focused considerable attention on the issue of 'local needs' in recent years. In short, the scenario presented has involved an in-movement of predominantly middle-class, higher income households to many areas of the British countryside, with the consequence being that significant proportions of the indigenous rural population, particularly low-income groups, have been disadvantaged. Such a scenario has meant that:

"...housing access has become a very emotive issue with 'local' people seen as the victims of a grossly inequitable situation" (Rogers, 1987, p151)

Whilst the concern for the welfare of local residents, particularly younger persons, dominated rural housing discussion in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there remains considerable uncertainty over the definition of the term 'local needs' and usefulness of 'local needs' housing policies. Indeed, Shucksmith (1990a) has commented that:

"...the use of the term in a vague and imprecise way, by planners in particular, appears to relate less to the concept of need and more to the politically acceptable rate of housing development in the area" (p212)

Rogers (1985) has attempted a broad-scale review of the development of, and arguments for and against 'local needs' policies. Such policies were first introduced in areas where urban pressures on the countryside were particularly strong. In such areas, districts were able to use planning powers contained in Section 52 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, in which they could insist that developers sign covenants restricting occupation of new dwellings to 'local' people in return for planning permission in cases where a clear local need could be demonstrated. The most reported case of implementation of such a policy has been that introduced by the Lake District National

Park in 1977 (Shucksmith, 1981, 1990b, 1991 and Clark 1982). However, whilst the implementation of local needs policies was both widespread and popular in the early 1980s, they were generally not welcomed by the Department of the Environment. Rogers (1985) has suggested two reasons for this reluctance:

"in part this has been because of doubts on the implementation of policies due to problems over the definition of 'local'. It also probably reflects a more deep-seated concern of central government that restrictions on private development might lead to greater expenditure on the public sector" (p372)

The view of successive Secretaries of State for the Environment through the 1980s was that planning could not control the occupancy of new private housing, and instead, should be concerned only with "land use not about who uses the land" (Rogers, 1985, p373). Following intense political lobbying by rural pressure groups, limited government recognition of housing problems in the countryside was incorporated into the 1980 Housing Act - with restrictions imposed on the resale of ex-council houses in National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Beauty, and specified 'rural areas'. This intervention by central government in the rural housing market has been discussed by Rogers (1985):

"there is a paradox...whereby a government which disapproves of the recognition of 'local need' within structure plans can nevertheless formally recognise the same feature within housing legislation, in as far as it is prepared to recognise 'rural' areas' where local claims will, at least in part, be met" (p375)

1.41 The arguments for and against

Rogers (1985) has attempted to summarise the main arguments in favour and against local needs policies, described by one author as "one of the most radical attempts in Great Britain to intervene in a rural housing market" (Clark, 1982, p97):

The arguments in favour

- (i) the 'local' qualification represents a rough proxy for welfare objectives in housing policy, since the earnings of local people are disproportionately low, and there is a need for positive discrimination in an open housing market;
- (ii) the local qualification cuts out those households who do not have a 'serious claim' on the housing resources of the area. This argument is usually used in combination with others;
- (iii) housing for local people would benefit local employment and maintain services. However, 'localness' in this instance includes people moving from outside the local area in order to take up employment in the locality, and would seem to conflict with the notion of a locally-born person;
- (iv) there exists a moral right to housing for local people over and above the demands of outsiders. This viewpoint is popular amongst elected local councillors;
- (v) the label 'local needs' is useful in that it possesses popular appeal and can be used to politicise rural housing problems:

"the amalgam of rural deprivation, grass roots politics and practical compromise between development and control which is represented by the label 'local need' provides a way of getting rural housing issues into the public and political agenda. The frequency with which newspapers highlight the issue and the practical activity at the time of the debate on the Housing Act 1980 are but two arguments strongly supporting this thesis" (Rogers, 1985, p376)

The arguments against

- (i) the first criticism concerns the legality of local needs plans. Whether developers could claim a 'restraint on their trade' or the resale of covenanted properties could be legally restricted to local people;
- (ii) the definition of 'local' - 'local' is usually defined as including persons who have lived or worked in the area for a minimum period, or who have immediate family

members who satisfy this criterion, and those people who are in need for reasons of employment or community position. However, the recent influx of 'outsiders' into many rural areas has produced a situation whereby substantial numbers of households earning middle-to-high incomes would qualify as 'local', in that they would satisfy the residential requirement (usually a minimum residence of 3 years). Rogers has suggested that if this statement is accepted, it contradicts the argument that local status is synonymous with increased housing need;

(iii) it is argued that local needs policies do not work in practice and may actually disadvantage local people as regards housing and employment opportunities. As Shaw (1982) has argued:

"the real danger of this device is that it may help to keep new houses 'local' but distracts attention from the real problem of 'need'" (p59)

Moreover, Shucksmith (1981) has suggested, from his own research in the Lake District, that far from securing new houses for local people, the local needs policy implemented by the Lake District National Park Authority resulted in a more intense demand from outsiders for existing housing - which made up the vast majority of the housing stock. The effect is that, once established, such policies compound the problem by massively inflating the purchase prices of existing properties, which meant that such housing became even less affordable for local people;

(iv) a final argument against local needs policies relates to their moral justification, in that they determine who can and cannot move into a particular area of the countryside. Rogers (1985) has cited evidence from the Channel Islands where such local needs policies have been widely implemented, and all outsiders, except for the most affluent, are effectively excluded from the local housing market. The two groups exempt from this policy are those persons marrying a local resident, and people taking up key employment. However, as Rogers (1985) has pointed out:

"it is in these cases where moral questions have most frequently arisen when house owners have been evicted from their own property because marriage breakdown or the loss of employment have effectively removed their right to own property" (p378)

Although Rogers accepted that the introduction of local needs policies represented an understandable response to the in-movement of more affluent groups to many rural areas, he nevertheless expressed considerable misgivings about their implementation, likely success and potential consequences.

"Indeed it could reasonably be argued that the process of recognising, by whatever definition, the special status of 'local' with a view to according it special treatment in effect elevates the notion of 'localness' to a positional good in its own right. In any event there seems sufficient doubts and uncertainties about the concept for it to prove a very poor foundation on which to base a substantial element of welfare policy" (ibid. p379)

In a more recent review of the Lake District National Park 'locals only' policy from 1977-84, Shucksmith (1991) has confirmed his earlier (Shucksmith, 1981) findings that the policy generally failed to help disadvantaged local groups. Shucksmith identified two weaknesses in the local needs policy:

- (i) the failure to promote the provision of low-cost housing, affordable by those groups intended to benefit;
- (ii) the failure to ensure the allocation to those groups of such houses that were built.

Shucksmith argued that the implementation of this local needs policy relied on allocation by the private market on the basis of ability-to-pay and as such was doomed to failure.

As an alternative policy, Shucksmith proposed that:

"future attempts to cater for disadvantaged groups in rural areas must ensure both the provision of low-cost housing, affordable by those client groups, and its allocation to those groups." (1991, p66)

Such an approach necessitated "a new class for social housing", a view shared by the Council for the Protection of Rural England (1991) in a recent discussion document on affordable housing.

1.42 The definition of need

A frequent criticism of policies aimed at meeting 'local needs' and also of surveys examining the level of housing need in particular communities is that the 'needs' being addressed are often confused with 'wants'. As Short (1992) has pointed out in the light of a major survey looking at levels of housing need in a district of South-East England:

"this is a difficult argument to counter; and certainly there were several replies from people wishing to move because of inadequate garage facilities, for example, who could not truly be said to be in need of housing" (p39)

Thirteen years earlier, Elson et al (1979), in a project looking at land release in areas of development constraint, commented that:

"one of the most striking findings of our work to date has been the lack of definition and vagueness which surrounds local needs policies. There are three questions which must be addressed when considering the issue of the definition of local needs: a) what is the definition of need?; b) what is the definition of local?; c) can any definition of the above be combined in any meaningful sense?"

(cited in Shucksmith, 1981, p17)

Four types of 'need' have been discussed by rural commentators (Shaw 1979; Shucksmith 1981, Short, 1992), based on Bradshaw's (1972) classification of need in the context of health issues:

- (i) normative need - defined by the expert, professional or administrator according to pre-determined criteria - for example, the condition of housing;
- (ii) felt need - representing what the individual defines as need, for example, whether a person feels that need exists for more housing in a village;
- (iii) expressed need - relating to the action taken by persons feeling need in order to publicise their needs. An instance of expressed need would be the registration for social housing, or local or national political lobbying;
- (iv) comparative need - concerning those persons who have the benefit of a certain facility or service compared to others who do not. For example, given the dramatic

reduction in the stock of social housing in recent years, a person with similar needs/qualifications to a present council tenant may not be able to access such housing.

Short (1992) considered that these definitions of need were partly based on material criteria and based partly upon social values:

"the idea of a 'decent home' changes over time, and makes uneven access to housing exceptionally difficult to qualify...One thing is certain [however]: the need expressed in terms of names on the Housing Waiting Lists underestimates the felt need considerably" (p40).

By the late 1980s, following massive rates of population in-movement to many rural areas, problems of affordable housing in the British (predominantly English) countryside had risen up the political agenda. Rural pressure groups, academics and journalists produced a whole host of reports, papers and articles concerned with housing problems faced by local people in rural areas. Confusion reigned over the legality of many local needs policies introduced throughout the decade and there was a need for central government clarification on the role of the planning system. Such clarification emerged in 1988, with the announcement by the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Nicholas Ridley that local need could form the basis of a planning consideration in special cases. This statement, together with a further circular, allowed for the release of land on village edges for the purposes of building low-cost housing for local people. Chapter Three explores this planning guidance in more detail, and assesses the level of implementation of low-cost housing schemes in rural areas of Wales.

The chapter so far has been very much restricted to the rural arena. It has considered rural housing within a wider context of socio-economic restructuring within the countryside and the development of rural housing research - from an early focus on housing conditions, through housing status groups to domestic property classes. Recognising the value of Shucksmith's (1990a, 1990b) incorporation of wider (urban)

housing theory into the study of housing in the countryside, Chapter One shifts the focus onto some key theoretical approaches to and empirical studies of housing developed and conducted outside of the rural arena.

1.5 Studies of urban housing

In the Preface, it was stressed that a central tenant of this research project involved the consideration of approaches to the study of housing developed within urban studies within the rural arena. Aspects of such work were touched on in the previous section, with Shucksmith's adoption of Saunders' notions of domestic property classes. This section provides a broader context for rural housing research by examining four key elements of urban housing research developed over the last twenty or so years which might provide a clearer understanding of the workings of the rural housing market:

- (i) unequal access - social groups and competition;
- (ii) institutions and gatekeepers;
- (iii) political economy approaches;
- (iv) current debates within the housing literature.

1.51 Unequal access

From the late 1960s, approaches to housing began to move away from notions of human ecology and models of free choice, with attention instead focused on questions of "why and how rather than what and where" (Cater and Jones, 1990, p44). Researchers of urban housing started to give consideration to the constraints imposed on different groups in terms of housing access. As Forrest, Murie and Williams (1990) have pointed out, such an approach considered that, within the housing system:

"all choices are constrained choices reflecting differential bargaining power and position in relation to bureaucratic allocation systems" (p10).

Such an approach, based predominantly on the work of Weber, was pioneered, in a British housing context, by Rex and Moore (1967). Rex and Moore viewed the urban housing market as an arena of struggle, with various interest groups competing for a

scarce resource. Within this struggle, however, they argued that certain groups could be identified which shared similar positions with regard to housing access, with such shared interests not merely limited to their economic or income positions. Bassett and Short (1980) have commented that such notions of housing conflicts and housing status groups resulted in important shifts within the urban housing research framework:

"Rex and Moore highlighted the importance of the allocation policies of public and private housing institutions and laid the basis of the managerialist approach" (1980, p50).

1.52 Institutions and gatekeepers

Following on from Rex and Moore's seminal research, a whole host of studies were conducted during the 1970s that addressed issues relating to the allocation and distribution of housing within the urban arena. Pahl coined the term 'gatekeeper' to describe these housing allocators and distributors - building society managers; estate agents and other exchange professionals; builders and developers; and local housing authority managers. Whilst, it is true to say that there existed considerable diversity within these 'managerial' housing studies, Bassett and Short have suggested that three recurring themes within such research can be identified: a classification of the key individuals and institutions involved in the supply and allocation of housing; a consideration of the rules and procedures used in allocation; and the effects of such rules and procedures on different types of households (1980, p52).

The following section considers the positions of several 'agents' or 'gatekeepers' operating within the housing market - based predominantly on a review of such agents conducted by Bassett and Short (1980).

Bassett and Short sub-divided the private housing market into three key areas:

- (i) processes of production - owners of land required for residential development; builders and developers who, with the aid of financial institutions, purchased land and determined the location, style and cost of new housing; and the planning system, intervening between landowners and housebuilders;
- (ii) processes involving financing the consumption of housing - financial institutions - banks and building societies - that enabled households to afford private housing without them having to immediately pay for the full cost of the property;
- (iii) processes of exchange - exchange professionals who enabled households to move through the housing system.

Processes of production

The Landowner - Bassett and Short (1980) have suggested that, in a society where land is privately owned, landowners have considerable power over the supply of housing. Whilst 'a rigid planning system has, in many ways, diluted some of this control, it nevertheless remains the case that:

"the ownership of a scarce and essential prerequisite for housing still gives the contemporary landowner an important role to play in the changing patterns of ownership" (ibid. p63).

The Builder and Developer - the structure of the British building industry is characterised by a reliance on major financial institutions in order to maintain its scales of operation. Bassett and Short have suggested two main reasons behind this scenario: firstly, since most potential purchasers cannot afford the full cost of new property, builders are dependent on banks and building societies for providing loans to potential purchasers; and secondly, most builders cannot afford the full costs of land purchase and the uncertainty of selling the property immediately after construction, and so are also reliant

on external financial sources. This 'partnership' between the building industry and the major financial institutions provides a system whereby:

"the supply of new housing [is] very sensitive to conditions in the money market" (ibid., p68).

As such it has been suggested that the production of housing passes through periodic "building cycles" lasting for about 20 years and reflecting fluctuations in interest rates on loans to both builders and purchasers.

Bassett and Short have proposed a three-fold classification of builders, based on modes of operation and constraints:

Small builders - operating over a limited spatial area with restricted levels of capital, and involved in the purchase of small parcels of land, often containing planning permissions. Such constraints limit the small builder to the construction of expensive housing on infill sites. Indeed, Harloe et al (1974) reported that small builders in parts of London tended to build high cost, detached properties on infill sites in 'respectable' areas, with such developments aimed at higher income home owners;

Large builders - often linked to financial institutions - are able to purchase substantial parcels of land and also establish land banks. Such builders are often involved in the construction of large-scale housing projects involving smaller units located in large peripheral sites and aimed at the 'mass market';

Falling between these two groupings are medium-sized builders, who, although usually not holding land banks are able to acquire building land through their network of contacts with local exchange professionals. Furthermore, such builders tend to lack the financial security of larger companies and, as such, cannot afford to undertake much speculative property constructions.

Bassett and Short have suggested that as the price of land has increased in the post-war period, different sized builders have reacted in different ways. For the small builder, construction has continued to be characterised by more expensive properties aimed at higher-income purchasers on traditionally low density sites, whilst the larger-scale builders:

"have had to find ways of absorbing the extra land costs to avoid pricing their products out of the market. Typically they have responded by building smaller houses of poorer quality and at greater densities than before the war" (Bassett and Short, 1980, p71).

These findings are particularly relevant in a the rural context and have yet to be widely applied.

Processes involving financing the consumption of housing

The Building Societies - although building societies represent non-profit making institutions they nevertheless operate in an open money market and are therefore in competition for investors funds. As such, societies operate a minimum-risk lending policy in order to safeguard the security of depositors' investments. Building societies tend to lend to households which they consider to be reliable repayers - judged in terms of "the absolute level of income and the stability of income"(ibid., p74). Thus, many low-paid workers are immediately denied the chance of home ownership. Further constraints on low-wage earners exist in that building society managers also take into account the security of income. As McDowell has commented:

"manual workers in particular tend to be further excluded by the concern of building society managers with the life-cycle pattern of earnings of potential borrowers. Professional people in stable occupations, often with a guaranteed rise in salary with age, are the managers' preferred clients. In contrast, overtime earnings, even if guaranteed, are seldom taken into account" (1982,p73).

In addition to the characteristics of the potential purchaser, studies have shown that building society managers also take into account the security of the property. Their preferred property type tends to be modern, semi-detached or detached, occupied by a single household, and located in the suburbs. This type of property usually experiences the fastest rate of price increase over the long period, and so, if the property has to be repossessed in the future, the value of the original loan can be easily recouped. Conversely, older properties such as terraced houses, multiple-occupancy properties and converted flats are generally not favoured by managers, and consequently mortgages for such property types are more difficult to obtain.

Studies by Boddy (1976) and Williams (1978) demonstrated that prejudices and stereotypes held by individual building society managers affected lending policies. Indeed, entire areas within the inner-city were deemed by certain managers to be unsuitable for mortgage advance - "redlined" - on grounds not related to the condition of an individual property but on its location within a perceived 'decaying' area.

Again these findings are particularly relevant within the rural arena, given the nature of local economies and the prominence of low incomes, and the nature of the rural housing stock.

Processes of exchange

Estate Agents - McDowell (1982) has suggested that estate agents can be seen as "a continuum ranging from passive co-ordination to active manipulation of market processes" (p86). Whilst their main role involves assisting clients with the sale of their property and aiding the potential purchaser to find a suitable property, estate agents may also have a number of subsidiary roles - including surveying, valuation, auctioning, property management and mortgage broking.

Given that estate agents earn commission on each property sold, it has been argued that it is in their interest to increase turnover and encourage property price inflation. For

example, research in Islington in the early 1970s by Williams (1976) uncovered close collaboration between building societies and estate agents in an attempt to promote gentrification of private-rented properties. As Williams has suggested:

"through their role as advisors to landlords, building societies and property companies, estate agents are in an important position with regard to the generation of change" (1976, p80).

Associations between various agents have been confirmed by a contemporaneous study of the Tyne and Wear housing market. The Community Development Project (1976) reported that of the 30 directors of local building societies, 5 were solicitors, 2 estate agents, 2 builders and 5 were accountants. As Bassett and Short (1980) concluded:

"such connections are important to estate agents in maintaining their hold over the business of property management and property sales" (p87).

The role of estate agents has not been explored within the rural housing market where they may play a significant part in the social recomposition of certain areas, and where there might exist strong connections between building societies and exchange professionals.

The Public Housing Market - McDowell (1982) has argued that, unlike private housing which is allocated by market mechanisms and financial institutions, and with access determined by a household's ability to pay, local authority housing is allocated by housing authority officers and committees according to some notion of social need. Both Rex and Moore and Pahl were concerned with the managers of public sector housing. Each addressed issues of bureaucratic barriers to access and demonstrated that so-called 'objective' measures of social need were often clouded by the prejudices of the local authority housing manager. Whilst local authority accommodation is theoretically

available to all groups, in practice, various sub-sections of society are either officially or unofficially excluded from this sector. As Cater and Jones (1990) have pointed out:

"it is restricted to those who meet the criteria of 'need' as defined by rules laid down by individual Local Authority housing departments, criteria which despite recent improvements may be so inflexible as to exclude many of the groups seeking housing" (p54).

Many housing authorities, for a variety of reasons but relating mainly to reduced resources, effectively exclude such groups as single people, childless couples, newcomers and young persons from council tenure by non-prioritising them on the waiting list. Further, local authority housing managers are able to select 'appropriate' accommodation for each household on the list, so that households viewed as 'socially disruptive' may be allocated the least desirable housing on so-called 'problems estates'.

Such issues of social housing provision and allocation need to be explored in a rural context.

1.53 Marxist political economy

In recent years managerialist perspectives on the housing market have been criticised by researchers adopting a Marxist political economy perspective who have argued that housing systems are not determined by the decisions of managers or gatekeepers but by the requirements of capital. Such an argument should be viewed as equally applicable to the study of housing in the countryside as to urban housing, although it is recognised that almost all research has been undertaken in an urban context (however, see Dickens *et al.*, 1985 for a political economic discussion of state intervention in the rural Norfolk housing market). The purpose of the thesis has not been a direct consideration of housing political economy within the countryside, rather it has examined the outcomes of change - of a housing and socio-economic nature - and the characteristics of housing provision, allocation and consumption at the local (rural) level. However, underpinning the whole of the research is the notion that the nature of the rural housing market, economic

structure and social composition is interconnected to wider processes of capital restructuring both at a national and international level. This section is included so that an alternative perspective on housing can be presented, a perspective that may be utilised in future rural housing research. The section also highlights on-going debates within the housing literature concerning the role of housing within social stratification. Such a debate has important implications for Shucksmith's (1990b) notion of domestic property classes within the British countryside.

While both managerialist and political economy perspectives have recognised the centrality of state intervention within the housing market throughout the 20th century, the reasons for such intervention are contested. For managerialists, state policies are seen as resulting from "electoral accountability, managerial power or some vague altruistic welfarism" (Cater and Jones, 1990, p65), whereas within Marxism, "state intervention in the housing market has the twofold aim of maintaining the continued production of housing as a profitable commodity in the sphere of production and to ensure the continued reproduction of labour power" (McDowell, 1980, p88).

Within a political economy perspective, state intervention is viewed, in simple terms, as necessary to mediate the contradiction between the goal of profit maximisation for capital and the need to reproduce the workforce. As Cater and Jones have commented, there exists an inherent contradiction within capitalism:

"...to allow popular access to decent housing is to sacrifice the rate of profit but to deny such access is to threaten the reproduction process and, worse still, to court social upheaval and organized resistance on the part of labour" (1990, p65).

Indeed, authors such as Castells (1978) have argued that the history of housing is one dominated by continual struggle between the vested interests of capital and the demands of the workforce for better quality housing. Whilst a managerialist approach would

regard state intervention in the form of affordable mass housing provision as a victory for the labour force, a political economy perspective would view such reform as a "counter-revolutionary strategy of social control" (Cater and Jones, 1990, p66).

A central tenet of a political economy perspective in relation to the housing system is the residential division of labour, whereby class differences within the workplace are replicated within the housing market. As Cater and Jones (1990) have pointed out, a political economy perspective views the housing market as:

"...a particularly potent source of divisiveness, with its residents differentiated into finely graded hierarchy of status layers, each of which is perceived by its members as an interest group in its own right. Capital's material concessions are not awarded en bloc to the whole of labour. They are selectively directed and the resultant inter-group rivalries serve to deflect attention from capital itself. At root, the key to class fragmentation is the occupational division of labour..." (ibid., p66).

Owner-occupation

Across the twentieth century, dramatic rises have been witnessed in the number of domestic property owners within Britain. Such increased home-ownership has resulted both from rising levels of personal wealth and central government policies promoting owner-occupation. Although traditionally a hall-mark of Conservative administrations, the goal of a 'property-owning democracy' has also been an integral part of Labour and SLD housing policies in recent years. Within the political economy perspective it is argued that such state promotion of owner-occupation has aimed:

"...not only to increase economic growth rates but also to ensure social stability and to legitimate and maintain the existing distribution of power and social relations...typically home ownership is associated with extreme conservatism" (McDowell, 1982, p89).

Indeed, as Cater and Jones have pointed out:

"owner-occupation functions as a process of incorporation...the co-option of sections of labour as loyal class allies who positively identify their own interests with those of capital" (p69).

For the state, home ownership is seen as providing security and stability amongst the population - a 'bulwark against bolshevism', whilst for the individual, home ownership is viewed as bringing independence, control over her/his property, and the possibility of wealth accumulation. By contrast, tenants can be seen as constrained by rules and regulations laid down by landlords and unable to 'own' their property (except in the case of local authority tenants who have a 'Right-to-Buy' their property).

The accumulative potential of owner-occupation, however, has been criticised by political economists who have argued that such wealth potential is merely ideological since it:

"...divert[s] attention from the fact that both owner and tenant receive state subsidies to maintain the existing housing system. The result of emphasising the differences, rather than the similarities between tenure locations, is to encourage a fragmentation of the working-class movement by setting owners against tenants" (McDowell, 1982, p89).

The expansion of owner-occupation can also be viewed as part of the capital accumulation process, given that such growth benefits "those branches of capital directly concerned with the provision of private housing" (Cater and Jones, 1990, p70), such as building and property capital, finance capital and exchange professionals.

Local authority housing

There is currently much debate within the political economy perspective regarding the mechanisms behind state intervention within the housing market. Whilst public provision of housing can be viewed solely as a tool to maintain the capitalist hegemony, it can also be argued that:

"there are good reasons for presenting the rise of the public sector as a response to organized political pressure, a genuine concession won by labour on its own terms, even a shift in the balance of class forces - at least in particular places at specific times" (Cater and Jones, 1990 p71).

Indeed, Dickens *et al.* (1985) have demonstrated the relative importance of local social processes within the provision of public housing in two areas of Britain. In Sheffield, for example, high levels of council provision resulted from the strength of the local labour organisation, whereas in the rural county of Norfolk such provision was initiated by landowners who were concerned by the shortage of suitable accommodation for the agricultural workforce.

In the period since 1979, as has been widely reported elsewhere, public sector housebuilding programmes have been slashed and millions of public tenants have been given the 'right to buy' their homes at greatly subsidised prices. That such a policy of de-collectivisation has been carried out by Conservative governments has caused much debate within the recent housing literature. As Cater and Jones (1990) have commented:

"if social housing so effectively accords with capital's need to divide and rule, why then has a British Tory government (explicitly devoted to capitalism as an ideal) currently selling off the public housing stock at a discount to sitting tenants ?" (p73).

Several authors have addressed such a question. Murie, for example, writing in 1982, has suggested that the collective provision of housing represented a transition between two different forms of private provision:

"it is reasonable to argue that since the last half of the nineteenth century a fundamental change has occurred in the way in which housing is consumed. In the nineteenth century the most appropriate mechanism for financing housing production and consumption was private landlordism, but for various reasons this situation has changed. Individual private ownership (owner-occupation) has emerged as the most appropriate mechanism in the twentieth century. But the period of transition and transfer...involved particular strains and shortages which (through political actions) have been offset by state intervention. The development of council housing...redistributed housing resources in the interests of the working class and has served the interests of capital and the 'social order' by minimising the effects of the restructuring of the private market. By the 1980s it is argued that the period of transition is over. The transitional role of council housing is therefore being abandoned and its permanent role is a more limited one" (1982, p35).

Closely related to this model of housing tenurial change is the threefold periodization of housing consumption proposed by Saunders (1984), in which it was proposed that housing has passed through three distinct phases, termed modes of consumption:

In the first, market phase, Saunders stated that consumption was organised chiefly through the market. Even though contradictions existed between low wages and a market-based mode of consumption, the role of the state was limited to regulation of the market, such as public health laws and the Poor Law. However, the failure of the private market to provide adequate, affordable accommodation for workers, combined with pressure from working-class organisations led to state intervention within the housing market during the late nineteenth century. In this second, socialised mode of consumption, the state provided crucial elements of consumption, such as housing, health and education. However, Saunders (1984) has suggested that whilst this new mode of consumption generally overcame the contradiction between low wages and adequate housing provision amongst the workforce:

"...at the expense of another - that between the socialised costs of welfare provision and the availability of government revenues. It is this contradiction which became increasingly manifest through the 1970s in the form of 'fiscal crisis', and the response has been a marked shift in recent years towards a new third phase in the form of a privatized mode of consumption" (Saunders, 1984, p210 - my emphasis).

In proposing such an argument, Saunders appeared to contradict the ideas of Castells (1978) and Szelenyi (1981), who had argued that state provision in the sphere of consumption was "necessary for the whole production process and more specifically to the reproduction of labour power in modern capitalism" (Szelenyi, 1981, p579). Indeed, Saunders suggested that:

"such arguments ignore both the rise in real incomes of many middle and working-class households which has made privatization possible, and the widespread desire for personal control in the sphere of consumption which has made privatization politically feasible" (1984, p211).

The notion that the shift from a subsidised to a privatised mode of consumption helped relieve the fiscal crisis in the 1970s has been contested by Forrest and Murie (1986). They have argued that council house sales, in fact, constitute a considerable financial loss for the state, with mortgagees receiving a higher level of state subsidisation than council tenants. A political economy perspective, however, views the switch from socialised to privatised modes not in financial terms, but rather considers the ideological benefits of a de-collectivised housing system. As Cater and Jones (1990) have stressed:

"..the sell-off of public housing helps to incorporate still more workers into the capitalist property ethic, to create new divides between tenants and former tenants and to further erode a housing mode which, because of its non-commodity form and the collectivist ethic which it symbolizes, exists as a permanent thorn of potential subversion in the capitalist body" (p74).

1.54 Housing tenure, class and income: current debates within the housing literature

In recent years there has been much debate within the housing literature regarding the significance of tenurial changes and the relative importance of production and consumption locations within the housing market. In order to discuss such issues it is necessary to consider housing tenurial change across the twentieth century.

Prior to 1919, private renting represented the dominant tenure in Britain, accounting for 90% of households in 1914. Even amongst more wealthy groups owner-occupation was not considered socially necessary (Daunton, 1977, p113). As Hamnett (1988) has commented:

"while housing conditions varied sharply by class and income, with many working-class households living in appalling conditions, private renting was a socially heterogeneous tenure" (p221).

However, the inception of council housing and owner-occupation, facilitated by the state and the newly formed building societies, introduced class filtration into the housing system. Early council housing represented a marked improvement in living conditions, but its relative expense limited occupation to the higher paid skilled working classes. Similarly, the availability of large-scale mortgage finance enabled the white-collar middle classes the opportunity of home ownership. This process of socio-tenurial recomposition accelerated from the mid to late 1950s as increased council provision enabled the lower-paid, less skilled elements of the working class to enter into public rental, whilst the expansion of owner-occupation opened up this tenure to higher-paid members of the working class. However, in the period since 1979, council provision has been dramatically reduced as new construction has been virtually halted and tenants have been given the right to purchase their properties.

Hamnett (1988) has argued that while these developments are not disputed, there exists considerable debate concerning the implications of such shifts for the social composition of different housing tenures in recent years. Hamnett has suggested that there exist two main schools of thought regarding these implications. The first contends that the opening up of owner-occupation and local authority housing to a broader spectrum of households has widened the social base of each tenure, whereas the second considers that an increasing social polarisation between owner-occupation and council rental has occurred, caused by a contraction of the private rented sector in the latter half of the twentieth century. As such, it has been suggested that the housing system has become increasingly differentiated between those who can afford to 'own' and those forced to rely on state provision, with Hamnett (1988) suggesting that such a process raises key questions concerning the relationship between occupational class and housing tenure:

"it is clear that tenure is strongly related to occupation and income, but how far is it determined by class position, and how far is it a result of other factors, such as culture or preference ? Putting the question another way, is tenure simply a direct reflection of class differences, or can it independently compound or ameliorate class inequalities generated in the labour market ? Does tenure comprise a distinct dimension of social stratification in Britain ?" (p225).

Such a question was first discussed by Rex and Moore (1967) in their influential study of the Sparkbrook housing market. The authors proposed a typology of housing classes, arguing that it was possible for a person to occupy a class position within the housing market which was independent of their position within the labour market.

Haddon (1970) has criticised the notion of housing classes, arguing firstly, that Rex and Moore confused housing classes with housing status groups, and secondly, that the occupancy of property represents the outcome of existing unequal distributions of income and wealth, rather than the cause of unequal access to life chances. According to Hadden, housing should be viewed merely as an element of consumption, not as something which

possesses any realisable market power. However, authors such as Saunders (1984) and Hamnett (1988) have argued that housing represents a real source of capital accumulation, since property prices in most regions of Britain have risen at rates above average inflation over the long term. Whilst, there has been considerable debate concerning the real or illusory gains of property ownership in Britain, it nevertheless remains the case that it is the property owner rather than the non-owner who acquires such gain (Ball and Kirwan, 1976).

A final criticism of the notion of housing classes has come from Cater and Jones (1990), who have argued that there exists as much differentiation within owner-occupation as between owners and non-owners. For example, considerable variations are evident between the accumulative potential of a modern four-bedroom detached house in the suburbs and a Victorian two-up-two-down located in a 'run down' area of the inner-city, and between similar types of property within the South-East of England and Northern Ireland. As Hamnett has pointed out:

"...if owner-occupiers are a fragmented and not a homogeneous group, they cannot be seen as a middle property class" (1988, p235).

1.6 Summary

This chapter has attempted to set the context for the research project. It has considered previous studies of rural housing and highlighted the inadequacies of much of this research. Acceptance of Rogers' (1987) criticism that rural housing research had tended to be piecemeal, rather than concentrating on the overall structure of the housing system led the discussion into two further avenues of study. Firstly, it was argued that the study of housing in the countryside needed to take into account the changing nature of society and economy within rural areas. Secondly, the general unwillingness of rural researchers to take on board theoretical approaches developed outside the rural arena was discussed. It was suggested that, relative to urban research, studies of housing within the countryside had neglected some key issues. Most notably, very little research has been undertaken that investigates the characteristics and influence of private gatekeepers within the housing market. Further, it was argued that consideration needed to be given to some of the ideas being proposed by Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b) relating to notions of housing classes and conflict surrounding additional residential development within the countryside.

In short, the intention of the thesis is to explore these neglected facets of research identified above within the context of rural Wales. The main text is sub-divided into three parts:

- (i) housing within a wider context of recent socio-economic change in both rural Wales and selected case-study areas (Chapters Two, Three and Four);
- (ii) the key agents involved in the provision and allocation of both private and social housing within the two case-study areas (Chapters Five and Six);
- (iii) the consumption of rural housing - the characteristics of groups within the housing market and their attitudes towards further residential development and opinions on housing need (Chapter Seven).

CHAPTER TWO: SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE IN RURAL WALES, 1981-91.

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter it was stated that a central tenet of the research project was a consideration of the rural housing market within a wider socio-economic context. Chapter Two provides such a context by reviewing demographic, social and economic changes in rural Wales over recent years. In the main, the chapter is based on published statistics derived from five main sources: 1981 and 1991 Censuses of Population (through SASPAC); the Registrar General's Mid-Year Population Estimates; NHSCR population movement statistics (obtained via NOMIS); Censuses of Employment 1981-89 (obtained via NOMIS); and Employment Service statistics.

In many ways, Chapter Two should be viewed as providing a general overview of some key aspects of socio-economic change within the region. It highlights how processes of economic restructuring, population movements and social recomposition may influence the intensity and nature of competition for housing within the Welsh countryside.

2.2 The definition of rural Wales

Although there exists considerable contemporary discussion regarding definitions of the rural, and meanings attached to rurality - see Cloke and Milbourne (1992); Halfacree (1993); and Marsden *et al* (1993) - for the purposes of this chapter, rural Wales has been defined using Cloke and Edwards' (1986) statistically-based Index of Rurality. In total, rural Wales consists of fifteen districts: all districts within the counties of Gwynedd and Powys; all of Dyfed except Llanelli; and the districts of Colwyn and Glyndwr in Clwyd (Figure 2.1). Although it is recognised that such a crude classification, based on a multi-

variate analysis of 1981 Census data is, in many ways, inadequate, it nevertheless provides a boundary for the analysis of recent housing and socio-economic change within the Welsh countryside that follows.



Figure 2.1: The fifteen districts of rural Wales (after Cloke and Edwards, 1986)

2.3 Population Change and Social Recomposition

2.31 Introduction

In Chapter One, reference was made to processes of population change taking place in many areas of rural Britain. By the 1970s, after many years of population decline, a population 'turnaround' began to be reported by several commentators, firstly, in the more *accessible* rural areas, and then in the remoter areas of the British countryside. Counterurbanisation, to use one of the terms applied to such a process, continued through the 1980s, with many rural areas witnessing dramatic gains in population. Such increases are highlighted in Table 2.1, which provides a breakdown of population change between 1971-91 by district type for England and Wales. It can be seen that 'remoter, mainly rural districts' witnessed average annual growth rates of 10 per 1000 *population* between 1971-81, and 8 per 1000 *population* in the 1981-91 period - rates that have only been matched by 'New Town' districts.

Table 2.1: Average annual growth rates (per thousand population) by type of district - mid-1971 to mid-1991

	1971-81	1981-91
England and Wales	1	3
Greater London	-10	0
Metropolitan Counties	-4	-2
Non-metropolitan Counties	6	5
Cities	-3	1
Industrial Areas	3	2
New Towns	14	8
Resort, port and retirement	6	8
Urban and mixed urban/rural	7	5
Remoter, mainly rural	10	8

Source: OPCS Monitor

Population change in rural Wales has mirrored these national patterns. Between 1981-91, the resident population in the region increased by around 37 000 persons, or 5.6%. Whilst this increase was at a lower rate than that recorded in the 1971-81 period, it nevertheless confirmed that absolute population decline no longer represented an issue for concern in rural Wales. Factors relating to economic growth, increased commuting levels, and early retirement have ensured that discussion has shifted towards the impacts of such population in-movement within the region. This said, concern has been expressed that population gains have not been universal across all groups of the population, with the number of young people in rural Wales continuing to fall.

2.32 The geography of population change 1981-91

Whilst population gains were recorded in each district of rural Wales, the scale of such increases varied considerably. Three districts recorded population growth rates of 10% or over between 1981-91 - Ceredigion (10.4%), Colwyn (13.4%) and Radnorshire (10.0%), whilst another four districts witnessed increases of at least 5% across the 1980s. Smallest population gains were reported in Brecknock and Preseli - where the decennial increase was less than 2% (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Population change in rural Wales - by district, 1981-91

	1981	1991	1981-91	
			no.s	%age
Colwyn	47 303	53 622	6 319	13.4
Ceredigion	55 357	61 109	5 752	10.4
Radnorshire	20 898	22 982	2 084	10.0
South Pembrokeshire	37 724	40 896	3 172	8.4
Montgomeryshire	47 661	51 527	3 866	8.1
Carmarthen	50 881	53 920	3 039	6.0
Meirionnydd	30 450	31 963	1 513	5.0
Glyndwr	39 009	40 885	1 876	4.8
Ynys Mon	64 496	67 371	2 875	4.5
Dwyfor	25 409	26 419	1 010	4.0
Dinefwr	36 413	37 798	1 385	3.8
Aberconwy	49 641	51 262	1 621	3.3
Arfon	50 295	51 461	1 166	2.3
Brecknock	39 562	40 206	644	1.6
Preseli	67 688	68 638	950	1.4
Rural Wales	662 787	700 059	37 272	5.6

Source: 1991 Census

2.33 The components of population change

Evidence taken from Mid-year Population Estimates produced by the Office of Population and Census Surveys (OPCS) indicates that almost all of the recorded population growth witnessed in rural Wales in the 1980s resulted from positive levels of net in-migration. In total, the OPCS has estimated that the region witnessed a net in-movement of 55 000 people between 1981-91. Overall population growth was at a lower level, however, as a result of a net reduction of 12 000 persons from a negative rate of natural change (that is, the death rate being higher than the birth rate). Thus, it can be suggested that without such high levels of in-migration, many areas of rural Wales would have continued to experience decline. However, the level of negative natural change has reduced in recent years - from 37 200 persons in the 1971-81 period to only 12 400 between 1981-91 - possibly because fewer younger persons are now leaving the region,

and because greater numbers of younger households are moving into parts of rural Wales (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: The components of estimated population change in rural Wales, 1971-81 and 1981-91

	1971-81	1981-91
natural change	- 37 200	- 12 400
net migration	+138 000	+55 000

Source: OPCS Monitors

Only three districts in rural Wales - Arfon, South Pembrokeshire and Ynys Mon - recorded positive rates of natural change between 1981-91. Of the remaining districts, Colwyn and Aberconwy - the districts containing highest proportions of elderly persons - witnessed the greatest losses due to natural change.

Levels of population in-movement also showed considerable geographical variation, with net in-migration greatest in the districts of Aberconwy (5 200), Carmarthen (5 400), Ceredigion (6 800) and Colwyn (10 600). A further seven districts recorded rates of net in-movement of between 2 000-5 000 persons in the 1980s. Even in the two districts with lowest levels of in-movement - Arfon and Ynys Mon - net gains still totalled over 1 000 persons in the 1981-91 period (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: Components of population change in rural Wales - by district, 1981-91

	natural change	net migration
Colwyn	-3 200	10 600
Glyndwr	- 800	2 900
Carmarthen	-1 200	5 400
Ceredigion	-1 200	6 800
Dinefwr	-1 200	3 100
Preseli	-1 300	1 100
South Pembrokeshire	1 100	3 800
Aberconwy	-2 700	5 200
Arfon	800	700
Dwyfor	-1 400	2 700
Meirionnydd	-1 000	2 700
Ynys Mon	1 100	600
Brecknock	- 900	1 600
Montgomeryshire	- 100	4 800
Radnorshire	- 400	3 000
Rural Wales	-12 400	55 000

Source: OPCS Monitors

OPCS Mid-year Population Estimates also allow an annual breakdown of population change throughout the 1980s. As Table 2.5 shows, the population total of rural Wales increased gradually between 1981-85, with growth levels of 1 500-5 000 persons per annum. In the period from 1985-86, however, population growth rates increased dramatically, and peaked in 1986-87 and 1987-88, when the rural population increased by over 10 000 persons per year. By 1989-90, population growth had fallen dramatically to 1 300 persons per annum, and estimates for 1990-91 indicate a small reduction in population. Indeed, four districts were estimated to have recorded small population losses in 1989-90 - Brecknock, Ceredigion, Dwyfor and Glyndwr - with several other districts witnessing their smallest population increases since the early 1980s. By 1990-91, six districts had recorded an absolute population decline - Aberconwy, Arfon, Carmarthen, Ceredigion, South Pembrokeshire and Ynys Mon. Three other rural districts, however, continued to show population gains (Meirionnydd, Montgomeryshire and Preseli) (Table 2.6).

Table 2.5: Annual population change in rural Wales 1981-91

	no.	%age		no.	%age
1981-82	1 500	0.2	1986-87	10 700	1.5
1982-83	2 400	0.3	1987-88	10 700	1.5
1983-84	5 000	0.7	1988-89	9 700	1.3
1984-85	3 100	0.4	1989-90	1 300	0.2
1985-86	6 900	1.0	1990-91	-2 300	-0.3

Source: OPCS Monitors

Table 2.6: Percentage annual population change in rural Wales - by district, 1989-90 and 1990-91

	<u>1989-90</u>	<u>1990-91</u>
Colwyn	0.0	0.3
Glyndwr	-0.2	0.2
Carmarthen	0.6	-1.2
Ceredigion	-0.4	-1.9
Dinefwr	0.0	0.0
Preseli	0.0	1.5
South Pembrokeshire	0.4	-1.1
Aberconwy	0.1	-0.5
Arfon	0.2	-0.1
Dwyfor	-0.5	0.1
Meirionnydd	0.2	0.8
Ynys Mon	0.2	-1.3
Brecknock	-0.1	0.3
Montgomeryshire	0.5	0.6
Radnorshire	0.2	0.4
Rural Wales	0.2	-0.3

Source: OPCS Monitors

2.34 Population movement to and from rural Wales

This section examines processes of population in-movement in more detail. It looks at several aspects of the migration process - the changing level of in- and out-movement, the origins and destinations of movers, and the age profiles of movers.

A limited amount of additional information on in-migration is provided by the 1991 Census of Population. Table 2.7 highlights the number of residents who were living at a different address one year previous to the Census, that is between April 1990 - April 1991. In total, around 64 000 persons (9%) living in rural Wales had moved to their present address in the last 12 months. These recent movers accounted for over 10% of persons in South Pembrokeshire, whilst a further six districts - Aberconwy, Brecknock, Ceredigion, Colwyn, Preseli and Radnorshire - each recorded between 9-10% of their resident population at a different address one year previous. Even in the district of

Dinefwr which recorded the lowest rate of mobility, over 7% had moved to their present residence in the preceding 12 months.

Table 2.7: Residents with different address one year prior to 1991 Census (percentages)

South Pembrokeshire	10.3	Meirionnydd	8.7
Ceredigion	10.0	Montgomeryshire	8.7
Colwyn	9.8	Glyndwr	8.5
Radnorshire	9.8	Ynys Mon	8.5
Preseli	9.7	Carmarthen	8.4
Aberconwy	9.7	Dwyfor	8.3
Brecknock	9.1	Dinefwr	7.6
Arfon	8.9	Rural Wales	9.2

Source: 1991 Census

These migration statistics, however, should be treated with caution since they include relocations of varying distances. Indeed, shorter distance moves within the boundaries of the residential district accounted for a majority of relocations in each district. Whilst not downplaying the influence of shorter distance relocations on rural social structures, attention is now given to longer distance population in-movements.

Table 2.8 highlights levels of recent in-movement to rural Wales from other regions of Great Britain (that is, from outside Wales) - predominantly made up of persons moving from areas of England. Such in-movers accounted for about one-fifth of all relocations in rural Wales between 1990-91, and more than one-quarter of moves in the districts of Meirionnydd, Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire (although the latter two districts represent 'border' districts). In a further six districts - Aberconwy, Brecknock, Ceredigion, Colwyn, Dwyfor and Ynys Mon - in-movement from other areas in Great Britain accounted for over 20% of all relocations. Even in Arfon - the district recording the lowest level of in-movement from areas outside Wales, such inward migration made up 15% of total relocating residents in the 1990-91 period.

Table 2.8: One year migrants who have moved from outside Wales but within Great Britain (percentages)

Radnorshire	29.6	Colwyn	20.4
Meirionnydd	26.0	Glyndwr	19.4
Montgomeryshire	25.7	Preseli	18.5
Dwyfor	23.5	Carmarthen	17.9
Ynys Mon	21.5	Dinefwr	17.6
Ceredigion	21.3	South Pembrokeshire	15.9
Brecknock	21.0	Arfon	15.2
Aberconwy	20.9	Rural Wales	20.5

Source: 1991 Census

The age profile of persons moving to rural Wales from other areas of Great Britain is dominated by 16-29 year olds (Table 2.9). Such a finding would seem to contradict the commonly held view that in-movement to rural areas is primarily by middle-to-elderly aged persons. In the 1990-91 period, a greater number of persons aged under 16 years moved to the region than persons of pensionable age and above (17.6% compared to 11.4%). In fact, more than 70% of persons moving to rural Wales from other areas of Great Britain were aged under 44 years.

Table 2.9: Age breakdown of one-year migrants from other areas of Great Britain, 1991 (percentages)

1 - 15 years	17.6
16 - 29 years	34.2
30 - 44 years	21.0
45 - pensionable age	15.9
pensionable age & over	11.4

Source: 1991 Census

Table 2.10 provides a district breakdown of one-year migrants aged under 16 years who have moved from outside Wales - an indicator of a family-type in-movement to the region. Highest proportions of such young persons were concentrated in the districts of rural Dyfed - Carmarthen, Ceredigion, Dinefwr, Preseli and South Pembrokeshire. Lowest levels of such persons were recorded in the five districts of Gwynedd. At the other end of the age spectrum, elderly in-movers (pensionable age and over) were over-represented in the more accessible districts of Aberconwy, Colwyn and Radnorshire.

Table 2.10: Percentage of one-year migrants from other areas of Great Britain aged under 16 years and pensionable age and over - by district, 1991

<u>aged under 16 years</u>		<u>pensionable age and over</u>	
Dinefwr	22.5	Radnorshire	15.8
Preseli	20.0	Colwyn	15.1
Carmarthen	19.4	Aberconwy	13.9
Ceredigion	19.1	Dwyfor	13.8
South Pembrokeshire	19.0	Meirionnydd	12.6
Montgomeryshire	18.5	Glyndwr	12.4
Colwyn	18.1	Ceredigion	12.2
Radnorshire	17.7	South Pembrokeshire	11.8
Brecknock	17.7	Montgomeryshire	11.5
Ynys Mon	17.4	Ynys Mon	9.8
Meirionnydd	17.2	Brecknock	9.4
Aberconwy	15.3	Carmarthen	9.2
Glyndwr	15.0	Dinefwr	9.1
Arfon	14.5	Preseli	7.8
Dwyfor	13.0	Arfon	6.6

Source: 1991 Census

So far the discussion has been concerned solely with processes of net migration (mid-year population estimates) and in-migration (1991 Census). Consideration has not been given to processes of out-movement and the components of in- and out-movement that make up the net figures. These have to be considered to provide a more balanced analysis of population movements to and from the counties of rural Wales. Statistics provided by the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR) which records notified re-registrations of patients between Family Practitioner Committees (FPCs) allow a consideration of these issues.

Since April 1984, a 100% count has been taken of each person's age, sex, previous FPC and new FPC. In England and Wales FPCs are based on counties and metropolitan districts and boroughs. One of the main advantages of this source is the speed in which registrations are recorded, with updated figures on population movements available on a quarterly basis. However, one drawback with using NHSCR data is that it is restricted to transfers between FPCs, and as such, excludes shorter distance moves within FPCs. Even allowing for this criticism, such a data source provides an important and accurate indicator of population movements within the UK.

The more detailed analysis of population movements that these data allow is restricted to a 12 month period between December 1989 - December 1990. The reason for such temporal specificity relates to the costs involved in obtaining NHSCR data (£10.50 per county per year if ordered in advance, and £135.50 per county per year if ordered after the period concerned). Whilst NHSCR data is available from NOMIS at a reduced cost, the Geography Department at Aberystwyth was not a registered user during the research period. This said, population data provided by the planning departments of Powys and Dyfed county councils allows an analysis of population movements from 1986 onwards.

2.35 Population movements by age group

Table 2.11 indicates that population movements to and from counties in rural Wales are very much age specific. Whilst all four counties recorded an overall net in-movement of population in 1990 - ranging from 238 persons in Gwynedd to 1,937 persons in the Dyfed - each county also experienced a net loss of persons aged 15-29 years. It is interesting to note at this point that persons aged 15-29 years represented the dominant in- and out-moving group. Thus, these figures seem to confirm the age breakdown of in-movement provided by the 1991 Census. The NHSCR data, however, illustrates that whilst 15-29 year olds represented the dominant in-moving group, they also comprised the largest out-moving group. It is also apparent from this table that net out-movement from Gwynedd was recorded not only amongst the 15-29 year group, but also amongst persons aged under 15 years and 30-44 years. Furthermore, in the counties of Clwyd, Dyfed and Powys substantial net in-movements of persons aged 30-44 years together with those aged below 16 years would seem to indicate an influx of 'family-type' households to these counties.

Table 2.11: Population movements in and out of counties in rural Wales, by age group, 1990

		0-14	15-29	30-44	45-64	65+
<u>Clwyd</u>	In	1 874	3 839	2 473	1 502	1 007
	Out	1 528	4 077	1 802	943	659
	<i>Balance</i>	346	-238	671	559	348
<u>Dyfed</u>	In	1 819	4 287	2 143	1 563	802
	Out	1 347	4 438	1 624	804	464
	<i>Balance</i>	472	-151	519	759	338
<u>Gwynedd</u>	In	1 020	3 150	1 368	1 153	605
	Out	1 054	3 342	1 378	732	552
	<i>Balance</i>	34	-192	-10	421	53
<u>Powys</u>	In	870	1 370	1 007	573	419
	Out	573	1 464	660	276	270
	<i>Balance</i>	297	-94	347	297	149

Source: OPCS

A final comment concerning this table relates to the importance of elderly in-movement to rural Wales. Whilst each county witnessed a net in-movement of persons aged 65 years and over, such an age group did not represent the dominant net in-moving age group. In Dyfed and Powys, for example, 30-44 year olds represented the dominant in-mover group, whilst in the counties of Gwynedd and Clwyd the main net in-moving group consisted of persons aged 45-64 years. However, where local populations already possess high proportions of elderly residents, additions to this age-group by in-migration will intensify age imbalance.

Table 2.12 provides a more detailed breakdown of the out-movement of young people from the region in 1990-91. It can be seen that each county recorded a net loss of persons aged 20-24 years. The counties of Clwyd and Powys witnessed losses in 15-19 year olds but net in-movements amongst persons aged 25-29 years, whilst Dyfed recorded a net in-movement of 15-19 year olds and a net loss of persons aged between 25-29. In Gwynedd, however, net out-movements were recorded across each age group.

Table 2.12: Population movements in and out of counties in rural Wales - persons aged 15-29 years, 1990

		15-19	20-24	25-29
<u>Clwyd</u>	In	778	1 681	1 380
	Out	993	1 826	1 258
	<i>Balance</i>	-215	-145	122
<u>Dyfed</u>	In	1 207	1 868	1 212
	Out	842	2 289	1 307
	<i>Balance</i>	365	-421	-95
<u>Gwynedd</u>	In	756	1 479	915
	Out	768	1 591	983
	<i>Balance</i>	-12	-112	-68
<u>Powys</u>	In	240	562	568
	Out	433	598	433
	<i>Balance</i>	-193	-36	135

Source: OPCS

2.36 The origins and destinations of movers

The geography of population movements to and from rural Wales can be investigated by drawing on information obtained from NOMIS on the origins and destinations of in- and out-movers in three rural counties - Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys - for 1990. The following section provides a brief commentary of population in- and out-migration for each county to accompany Tables 2.13-2.15:

Dyfed - seven out of ten persons *moving out* of Dyfed in 1990 relocated to one of three regions: South-East England (28%); South-West England (14%); and other Welsh counties (29%). These three regions, together with the West Midlands, also accounted for the origins of the vast majority of incomers to the county (82%). In terms of *in-movement*, a greater number of persons had relocated from the South-East of England (32%) than had moved from other counties of Wales (27%). Overall, three regions dominated net population movements to Dyfed - the South-East (+914 persons); the West Midlands (+464); and the remaining counties of Wales (+391).

Table 2.13: Population movements to and from Dyfed, 1990

<u>destinations & origins</u>	<u>out-movement</u>	<u>in-movement</u>	<u>balance</u>
	%age	%age	no.
N. Ireland / Isle of Man	0.4	0.5	+19
Scotland	3.2	1.4	-133
Northern	1.7	1.2	-20
Yorkshire & Humberside	3.8	3.3	+20
East Midlands	4.2	4.1	+68
East Anglia	2.7	2.2	-3
South East	28.2	31.7	+914
South West	13.9	12.2	+84
West Midlands	8.7	11.5	+464
North West	4.8	5.2	+136
Wales	28.5	27.0	+391

Source: OPCS

Gwynedd - population *movement out* of Gwynedd in 1990 was mainly to three areas - other Welsh counties (27%); the South-East (21%); and the North-West (18%). A further 11% of out-movers relocated to the West Midlands. As reported for Dyfed, the regional pattern of in-movement origins largely reflected that for out-movement. Over one-quarter of persons *leaving* Gwynedd moved to the North-West, a fifth relocated to other counties in Wales, whilst the South-East and West Midlands regions accounted for 19% and 14% respectively of the origins of recent in-movers.

In terms of the overall balance of population movements, the North-West region recorded the highest level of net in-movement to Gwynedd (672 persons), followed by the West Midlands (257) and the East Midlands (168).

Table 2.14: Population movements to and from Gwynedd, 1990

<u>destinations & origins</u>	<u>out-movement</u>	<u>in-movement</u>	<u>balance</u>
	%age	%age	no.
N. Ireland / Isle of Man	0.7	0.4	-16
Scotland	3.2	1.8	-91
Northern	2.1	1.9	-7
Yorkshire & Humberside	5.4	4.5	-42
East Midlands	2.3	4.5	+168
East Anglia	2.2	2.1	+1
South East	20.8	18.8	-58
South West	7.0	5.9	-50
West Midlands	11.1	14.0	+257
North West	18.3	26.5	+672
Wales	27.0	19.8	-411

Source: OPCS

Powys - in- and out- movements to and from Powys were dominated by three regions: the West Midlands; the South-East; and remaining Welsh counties. The West Midlands accounted for the origins of 24% of all in-movers and the destinations of 26% of total out-movers; the South-East made up 18% of in-movers and 22% of out-movers; and other Welsh counties accounted for 30% of persons moving to Powys and 27% of people leaving the county. In terms of the overall balance of movement, the regions of the South-East (+381 persons); the West Midlands (+370) and the remaining counties of Wales (+183) contributed the highest levels of net in-movement to Powys.

Table 2.15: Population movements to and from Powys, 1990

<u>destinations & origins</u>	<u>out-movement</u>	<u>in-movement</u>	<u>balance</u>
	%age	%age	no.
N. Ireland / Isle of Man	0.8	0.7	+8
Scotland	3.2	1.0	-64
Northern	1.2	1.3	+16
Yorkshire & Humberside	2.2	2.8	+53
East Midlands	3.5	2.7	+4
East Anglia	2.2	2.1	+19
South East	18.0	22.1	+381
South West	9.6	9.0	+80
West Midlands	24.0	26.4	+370
North West	5.1	5.0	+51
Wales	30.4	27.0	+183

Source: OPCS

2.37 Temporal change in Dyfed and Powys

Additional information provided by Dyfed and Powys planning departments would seem to indicate that the age and geographical characteristics noted above for the 1990-91 period are almost identical to those reported in the mid-1980s (Tables 2.16 and 2.17). In each county there has been a continuous loss of younger population (15-29 years) - with the exception of 1985 in Powys - through the mid to late 1980s. The geography of these population movements is fairly stable as in- and out-migration to and from Powys in 1986-87 was dominated by the same three regions as reported in 1990 - the West Midlands, the South-East and other Welsh counties. Similarly, population movements to and from Dyfed in 1986-87 were dominated by the regions of the South-East, South-West and West Midlands, together with other counties in Wales.

Table 2.16: Net movements by age in Dyfed (1986-90) and Powys (1984-90)

		0-14	15-29	30-44	45-64	65+	not stated	all
Dyfed	1986-87	888	-209	853	1 390	585	16	3 523
	1987-88	1 236	-279	1 404	1 914	686	9	4 970
	1988-89	1 072	-101	1 208	1 724	775	-2	4 676
	1989-90	596	-513	535	795	298	2	1 713
	average	948	-276	1 000	1 456	586	7	3 721
Powys	1984	154	-244	84	357	-48	1	303
	1985	313	13	244	325	177	11	1 083
	1986	247	-94	324	400	261	0	1 138
	1987	254	-35	320	546	330	0	1 414
	1988	293	-27	355	622	389	-3	1 629
	1990	297	-94	347	297	149	0	1 005
	average	268	-104	333	468	243	2	1 209

Source: Dyfed and Powys Planning Departments

Table 2.17: Movements by region in Dyfed (1986-87) and Powys (1986-87)

<u>destinations & origins</u>	<u>Dyfed</u>			<u>Powys</u>		
	<u>out-</u> <u>%age</u>	<u>in-</u> <u>%age</u>	<u>balance</u> <u>no.</u>	<u>out-</u> <u>%age</u>	<u>in-</u> <u>%age</u>	<u>balance</u> <u>no.</u>
N. Ireland / IOM	0.4	0.5	+34	0.7	0.6	+12
Scotland	1.6	1.8	+13	2.0	1.8	+49
Northern	1.6	1.4	+27	0.9	1.6	-12
Yorkshire & Humbs.	2.9	3.1	+126	1.8	2.1	+14
East Midlands	4.4	4.7	+194	3.5	2.8	+77
East Anglia	2.8	2.3	+30	2.1	1.4	+58
South East	27.3	33.6	+1 786	18.2	10.8	+551
South West	13.9	10.9	+101	9.5	10.0	+113
West Midlands	10.8	10.4	+331	24.8	27.7	+232
North West	4.6	5.8	+314	5.5	5.0	+97
Wales	29.3	25.5	+531	24.0	29.9	+101

Source: Dyfed and Powys Planning Departments

These NHSCR figures also confirm the population trends highlighted previously by the mid-year population estimates. In Powys the net level of population in-movement increased continually from 1986 and peaked in 1990, whereas in Dyfed annual population growth peaked in the 1987-89 period, and was at a much lesser rate in the 1989-90 period. The tables also highlight the mechanisms behind such population change. It appears that overall population changes within Dyfed have been caused by fluctuations in the number of persons moving into the county - in-movement ranged from 10,091 in 1984-85 to 15,324 in 1987-88, whilst out-movement varied between 8,511 in 1984-85 to 10,549 in 1988-89. Indeed, the number of people leaving Dyfed has increased since 1984-85. Population growth levels witnessed in Dyfed over recent years have been caused by increases in people moving to the county, rather than by reductions in numbers leaving (Table 2.18). Thus, it can be suggested that further reductions in numbers moving to Dyfed could soon bring about depopulation.

Table 2.18: In- and out-movements, Dyfed 1984-90

	In	Out	Balance
1984-85	10 091	8 511	+1 580
1985-86	11 584	9 120	+2 464
1986-87	13 122	9 599	+3 523
1988-89	15 324	10 354	+4 970
1989-90	11 138	9 425	+1 713

Source: Dyfed Planning Department

2.38 Changing age structures 1981-91

One of the main impacts of such population movements has been on the age structure of rural Wales. Table 2.19 shows that greatest population increases have taken place amongst persons aged 60 years and above (16%). This said, the 15% growth recorded by 25-44 year olds, together with the rise in children aged under 5 years would seem to indicate an increase in young, family type households in the region - an increase caused mainly by a net in-movement of such households. Indeed, in a majority of districts, a higher increase in 25-44 year olds than persons aged 60 years and over was recorded between 1981-91. However, population growth was not witnessed across all age groups. Numbers of 5-14 year olds and 15-24 year olds fell by 9.4% and 1.4% respectively in the 1981-91 period. Indeed, decline in the numbers of persons aged 5-14 years were recorded in thirteen of the fifteen districts of rural Wales, whilst reductions in 15-24 year olds were reported in nine of these rural districts.

The greatest increase in 'family 'type' households was recorded in the district of Colwyn - a 31% increase in 25-44 year olds and a 39% rise in children under 5 years. Other substantial rises were recorded in the districts of Ceredigion (20%,21%), Glyndwr (17%, 21%), Montgomeryshire (20%, 21%) and Aberconwy (20%, 19%). Lowest rates of increase in this type of household were recorded in Ynys Mon, Preseli and Brecknock.

Elderly increases were highest in the districts of South Pembrokeshire (29%), Radnorshire (23%) and Preseli (21%), with a further two districts - Montgomeryshire and Ynys Mon - recording growth rates of over 19%. Only in the districts of Aberconwy and Arfon did the number of elderly persons increase by less than 10%.

Table 2.19: The changing age structure of rural Wales - by district, 1981-91 (percentages)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
Colwyn	39.1	-0.1	6.3	30.9	18.8	12.7
Glyndwr	20.7	-16.4	-0.8	16.8	7.5	13.9
Carmarthen	1.3	-2.1	0.8	13.4	6.9	16.5
Ceredigion	21.4	0.3	4.2	20.1	15.6	17.7
Dinefwr	8.0	-5.4	-6.5	13.6	6.1	10.6
Preseli	4.8	-10.5	-15.0	7.5	7.4	21.0
South Pembrokeshire	13.2	-9.1	-2.9	11.6	18.0	29.2
Aberconwy	18.7	-14.0	-3.4	19.9	6.7	8.7
Arfon	20.1	-14.3	4.9	16.1	2.5	8.1
Dwyfor	6.2	-14.9	6.5	12.5	6.2	12.9
Meirionnydd	14.2	-10.4	-1.4	16.4	10.4	13.5
Ynys Mon	1.5	-20.5	-3.2	5.5	14.7	19.9
Brecknock	-2.5	-8.0	-10.7	9.0	-6.1	14.6
Montgomeryshire	20.7	-10.4	-0.8	20.0	9.6	18.2
Radnorshire	12.9	-5.3	1.6	14.4	20.9	23.3
Rural Wales	13.4	-9.4	-1.4	15.2	9.7	16.1

Source: 1991 Census

The outcome of such changes in the age structure through the 1980s is presented in Table 2.20. It is evident from this table that, in 1991, elderly persons constituted a significant proportion of the rural population - around one-quarter of residents were aged 60 years and over, and a further 18% were aged 45-59 years. Highest proportions of elderly persons (60 years and over) were recorded in the districts of Colwyn (31%), Aberconwy (30%) and Dwyfor (29%). No district contained less than one-fifth of its population aged 60 years and over.

Young family type households were most prominent in Arfon, Glyndwr, Montgomeryshire and Preseli - where the highest proportions of both 25-44 year olds and young children were reported.

Table 2.20: The age structure of rural Wales - by district, 1991 (percentages)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
Colwyn	5.7	11.0	11.7	24.2	16.6	30.8
Glyndwr	6.1	11.5	13.0	26.6	17.5	25.3
Carmarthen	5.6	12.5	12.6	25.9	18.6	25.0
Ceredigion	5.7	11.7	12.5	26.3	18.0	25.8
Dinefwr	5.4	11.9	12.2	25.7	18.4	26.3
Preseli	6.3	13.0	12.8	27.3	18.0	24.1
South Pembrokeshire	6.3	12.7	13.1	25.9	18.0	29.4
Aberconwy	5.5	10.6	12.0	24.5	17.2	30.3
Arfon	6.9	12.5	14.7	27.5	16.3	22.0
Dwyfor	5.2	11.1	13.1	23.2	18.0	29.4
Meirionnydd	5.8	11.7	12.3	24.6	18.3	27.3
Ynys Mon	6.4	12.8	13.7	26.2	17.6	23.2
Brecknock	5.5	12.4	12.3	26.6	17.8	25.5
Montgomeryshire	6.3	11.9	13.0	27.5	17.7	23.6
Radnorshire	5.8	11.9	12.1	25.6	18.0	26.7
Rural Wales	5.9	11.9	12.7	25.8	17.7	25.9

Source: 1991 Census

2.39 The cultural implications of population change

Previous sections have suggested that a significant proportion of in-movement to rural Wales has come from English regions. NHSCR data would seem to indicate that almost three-quarters of persons moving into rural counties had relocated from areas of England - 71% in Dyfed; 71% in Powys; and 78% in Gwynedd. Some of these people will be 'return migrants', but it is likely that the majority will be English by birth and predominantly English speakers.

This type of in-movement to a region in which both the Welsh language and culture remain strong has not been without tension and contestation. The fear expressed by many individuals and organisations within the region is that such a high level of English in-migration is eroding the fabric of Welshness within many rural communities, and particularly in the north-west of the region.

The scale of English in-movement to areas of rural Wales can be seen in Table 2.21. Between 1981-91, the number of English-born residents increased by over 47 000, or 31.5%, so that by 1991 an average of three out of ten people living in rural Wales had been born in England. In the districts of Colwyn, Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire English-born residents comprised over 40% of the total population. English persons made up less than one-quarter of the overall population in only five districts - Arfon, Brecknock, Carmarthen, Dinefwr and Preseli.

Table 2.21: Percentage of residents born in England in rural Wales - by district, 1991 and 1981-91

<u>1991</u>		<u>change 1981-91</u>	
Colwyn	45.6	Ceredigion	51.9
Radnorshire	45.6	Carmarthen	50.5
Montgomeryshire	41.4	Dinefwr	49.7
Aberconwy	38.1	Dwyfor	46.4
Meirionnydd	32.6	Montgomeryshire	41.8
Ceredigion	31.5	Meirionnydd	36.9
Glyndwr	31.4	Radnorshire	33.8
South Pembrokeshire	28.8	South Pembrokeshire	29.9
Ynys Mon	28.3	Brecknock	24.3
Dwyfor	25.5	Glyndwr	23.5
Brecknock	24.9	Preseli	21.8
Preseli	22.8	Arfon	21.6
Carmarthen	21.6	Colwyn	18.0
Arfon	20.1	Aberconwy	12.9
Dinefwr	18.0	Ynys Mon	9.3
Rural Wales	30.4	Rural Wales	31.5

Source: 1991 Census

Table 2.21 also charts the growth of English-born residents across rural Wales in the 1980s. Whilst the average increase was 31.5%, in three districts of Dyfed - Carmarthen, Ceredigion and Dinefwr - growth rates of over 50% were recorded in the 1981-91 period. Lowest rates - less than 20% - were witnessed in the districts of Aberconwy, Colwyn and Ynys Mon.

Although a proportion of English born in-migrants may integrate fully into their host communities, it is fair to say that the vast majority of such persons remain non-Welsh speakers. Such a suggestion is confirmed by Census data relating to Welsh language

change in the 1980s. In 1991, over 304 000 residents (42%) living in rural Wales spoke Welsh, an increase of more than 7 000 Welsh speakers, or 2.4% over the ten year period to 1991. However, whilst the region recorded an absolute increase in the number of Welsh speakers, in relative terms, the proportion of Welsh speakers fell from 46% in 1981 to 42% in 1991. This is to say that the non-Welsh speaking population increased at a much faster rate than the Welsh speaking population. In fact, increases in the number of Welsh speakers were recorded in ten districts, whilst the proportion of residents speaking Welsh rose in only South Pembrokeshire and Radnorshire - the districts with the lowest proportions of Welsh speakers in 1981 and 1991.

Table 2.22 highlights spatial variations in language change throughout the 1980s. By far the greatest increases in the use of Welsh were recorded in the districts of Radnorshire (86%) and South Pembrokeshire (28%). However, it should be pointed out that the magnitude of these proportional rises may be due to the fact that each district recorded a very low absolute level of Welsh usage in 1981. A further five districts reported absolute and relative losses in the number of Welsh speakers - Brecknock, Dinefwr, Dwyfor, Glyndwr and Meirionnydd.

Table 2.22: Percentage of residents speaking Welsh in rural Wales - by district, 1991 and 1981-91

<u>1991</u>		<u>percentage change 1981-91</u>	
Dwyfor	73.1	Radnorshire	85.7
Arfon	71.5	South Pembrokeshire	28.1
Dinefwr	64.4	Montgomeryshire	6.2
Meirionnydd	63.1	Ynys Mon	4.9
Ynys Mon	59.6	Aberconwy	3.9
Ceredigion	57.1	Colwyn	3.6
Carmarthen	56.1	Ceredigion	3.4
Glyndwr	38.4	Arfon	2.9
Aberconwy	34.8	Preseli	2.2
Colwyn	24.6	Carmarthen	1.5
Montgomeryshire	24.1	Meirionnydd	-0.6
Preseli	23.4	Brecknock	-0.6
Brecknock	22.3	Dwyfor	-1.2
Radnorshire	8.0	Glyndwr	-1.7
South Pembrokeshire	7.9	Dinefwr	-2.1
Rural Wales	41.9	Rural Wales	2.4
<i>Source: 1991 Census</i>			

The proportions of Welsh speakers in each rural district for 1991 are also highlighted in Table 2.22. Only in two districts - Arfon and Dwyfor - did Welsh speakers constitute more than two-thirds of the overall population - compared to four districts in 1981, with the Welsh language remaining strongest in the western, and particularly north-western areas of the region - in Ceredigion and the districts of Gwynedd. Welsh speakers were relatively fewer in number in the eastern districts of Powys and in Colwyn, and also in the historically 'English' areas of Preseli and South Pembrokeshire.

Clearly, these processes of population movement, and social and cultural recomposition have important implications for the make-up of groups within the rural housing market, and the nature and intensity of competition for such housing. However, such demographic and social change is also interconnected with processes of economic restructuring within rural Wales.

2.4 The economy of rural Wales: a restructured region ?

2.41 Introduction

In Chapter One mention was made briefly of dramatic recent changes affecting the employment structures of many rural areas in Great Britain. It was suggested that a significant proportion of in-moving groups to rural areas were relocating in order to take advantage of employment opportunities available in the British countryside. A study by Townsend (1991) highlighted that rural employment changes throughout the 1980s had very much mirrored national trends - shifting from full to part-time work; manual to non-manual work; male to female-based; and from primary and secondary to service employment. The final section of this chapter examines employment change within rural Wales throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. It focuses on three aspects of such change: the changing structure of work; unemployment; and income levels.

2.42 The changing structure of work

Persons in employment

In common with many other areas of rural Britain, the 1980s was a decade of considerable employment growth in rural Wales. Between 1981-91, the number of persons in employment within the region increased by around 29 000, or 11% (Table 2.23). Whilst each district reported rises in their resident workforce, employment growth rates were highest in the districts of Ceredigion, Colwyn, Montgomeryshire, and Radnorshire, where growth rates of more than 20% were recorded in the 1981-91 period. Interestingly, three of these districts are within the area of operations of the Development Board for Rural Wales, although no causal link is suggested. Lowest employment growth

rates - less than 10% - were recorded in the districts of Brecknock, Dinefwr, Preseli, South Pembrokeshire and Ynys Mon.

Table 2.23: Persons in employment in rural Wales, 1981-91. (percentage change)

Montgomeryshire	28.5	Carmarthen	11.6
Ceredigion	25.6	Arfon	10.6
Radnorshire	22.1	South Pembrokeshire	9.9
Colwyn	22.0	Ynys Mon	9.0
Dwyfor	18.2	Brecknock	7.2
Meirionnydd	17.0	Dinefwr	6.4
Glyndwr	16.8	Preseli	1.6
Aberconwy	14.1	Rural Wales	11.4

Source: 1991 Census

Turning from a geographical to a gender breakdown of employment change through the 1980s, it can be seen from Table 2.24 that a much higher proportion of women entered the formal labour employment sector in this post 1981 period. In terms of absolute numbers, more than four times as many women entered the workplace as did men between 1981-91, a female increase of around 25% compared to the 3% growth level recorded for male workers.

Table 2.24: A gender breakdown of employment change in rural Wales, 1981-91

	1981	1991	1981-91	
			no.	%age
men in employment	160 881 (62.9%)	166 233 (58.3%)	5352	3.3%
women in employment	95 029 (37.1%)	118 861 (41.7%)	23 832	25.1%
total	255 910	285 094	29 184	11.4%

Source: 1991 Census

Given the dominance of female employment growth in the 1980s, it is hardly surprising that the geography of such growth mirrors that reported earlier for overall employment growth. Five districts recorded increases of more than 40% in their female workforce - Ceredigion, Colwyn, Dwyfor, Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire (Table 2.25). Even in the two lowest ranked districts - Arfon and Preseli - the number of women in employment increased by over 20% in the 1981-91 period.

Table 2.25: Women in employment in rural Wales - by district, 1981-91 (percentages)

Montgomeryshire	51.1	Glyndwr	32.0
Radnorshire	47.1	Carmarthen	31.1
Ceredigion	46.6	Brecknock	27.2
Dwyfor	41.3	Dinefwr	26.9
Colwyn	40.3	Aberconwy	26.7
Meirionnydd	37.3	Arfon	24.1
South Pembrokeshire	36.9	Preseli	23.2
Ynys Mon	33.2	Rural Wales	25.1

Source: 1991 Census

Whilst in overall terms, the male workforce increased by around 3% in rural Wales between 1981-91, the districts of Brecknock, Dinefwr, Preseli, South Pembrokeshire, and Ynys Mon each reported an absolute loss in the number of resident male workers - ranging from 3-10% (Table 2.26). The greatest levels of growth in male employment were witnessed in the districts that also recorded high levels of female increases - Ceredigion (20%) and Montgomeryshire (17%). A further five districts reported increases of more than 5% through the 1980s.

Table 2.26: Men in employment in rural Wales - by district, 1981-91 (percentages)

Ceredigion	20.4	Arfon	1.7
Montgomeryshire	16.6	Carmarthen	0.3
Colwyn	10.3	Ynys Mon	-3.2
Radnorshire	9.2	South Pembrokeshire	-3.5
Glyndwr	7.7	Brecknock	-4.4
Dwyfor	6.2	Dinefwr	-4.9
Meirionnydd	5.5	Preseli	-9.6
Aberconwy	5.4	Rural Wales	3.3

Source: 1991 Census

Alongside such a gender recomposition of the rural workforce, the region has also witnessed shifts in the nature of employment. In general terms, employment increases have been dominated by part-time work and self-employment (Table 2.27). Between 1981-91, the number of men engaged in part-time employment increased by almost 86%, whereas full-time work fell by around 8%. Levels of male self-employment rose by 21% in the case of those self-employed with employees, and by 35% for those without employees.

Both part-time and full-time female employment levels increased through the 1980s - by 44% and 22% respectively. Higher growth levels were recorded amongst self-employed women. Here the number of women self-employed with employees increased by 57% and those without employees grew by 58%.

Table 2.27 also highlights the geography of such workplace restructuring in the 1981-91 decennial period. Whilst it is not intended to provide any detailed commentary on such statistics, it is worth noting that losses in male full-time employees of more than 10% were recorded in six districts - Brecknock, Carmarthen, Dinefwr, Preseli, South Pembrokeshire and Ynys Mon - across the 1980s.

Table 2.27: The changing structure of employment in rural Wales - by district, 1981-91

	men				women			
	employees		self-employed		employees		self-employed	
	FT	PT	WE	WtE	FT	PT	WE	WtE
	%age	%age	%age	%age	%age	%age	%age	%age
Colwyn	0.5	80.9	28.9	32.5	34.2	42.2	62.4	59.5
Glyndwr	-0.4	65.0	22.9	27.1	23.7	35.0	49.2	73.4
Carmarthen	-11.2	118.5	22.8	17.4	17.2	50.8	79.4	30.6
Ceredigion	-6.7	111.5	27.5	27.8	25.2	39.8	79.8	47.2
Dinefwr	-16.4	105.8	24.5	20.7	16.5	45.2	67.6	23.0
Preseli	-22.2	122.5	12.5	31.7	7.1	40.1	43.0	48.0
South Pembrokeshire	-17.4	97.2	18.9	52.7	18.5	56.5	34.8	71.7
Aberconwy	-3.1	66.6	11.3	115.5	18.2	35.0	38.5	37.6
Arfon	-7.7	45.9	27.4	53.8	14.7	30.2	36.4	110.2
Dwyfor	-5.1	95.6	8.3	31.2	24.0	66.0	26.1	74.9
Meirionnydd	-7.2	73.3	20.7	34.9	24.5	47.2	68.7	50.1
Ynys Mon	-12.7	75.4	28.7	31.9	23.1	41.9	49.6	62.4
Brecknock	-16.0	104.5	18.7	20.0	22.2	26.0	55.1	50.2
Montgomeryshire	-0.4	68.2	16.4	16.6	30.5	47.3	84.5	76.8
Radnorshire	2.7	54.8	23.8	12.4	36.7	55.8	74.3	54.4
Rural Wales	-8.2	85.7	20.9	35.1	22.4	43.9	56.6	58.0

key: FT=full-time; PT=part time; WE=with employees; WtE=without employees.

Source: 1991 Census

2.43 The changing occupational structure of employment

The section so far has highlighted recent increases in the number of persons in employment in rural Wales, and also shown that such growth has been most pronounced amongst women, part-time work and self-employment. Accompanying such changes have been shifts within the occupational structure of employment in the region. This section examines such shifts using data obtained from the four Censuses of Employment conducted in the 1980s (1991 Census of Population 10% employment statistics are not yet available at the time of writing).

By 1981, it was apparent from the Census of Population that the service sector dominated employment in rural Wales (Table 2.28). Around six out of every ten persons in employment in the region worked in services - distribution and catering (21%); transport and communication (6%); and other services (35%). Highest proportions of workers engaged in service occupations were witnessed in the districts of Colwyn (68%) and Aberconwy (69%), with only three districts recording less than half of the total workforce engaged in this sector - Glyndwr, Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing - the historically dominant employment sector within the Welsh countryside - accounted for only one-eighth of all workers in rural Wales. Only in two districts - Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire - did this sector account for more than one-fifth of total persons in employment.

Manufacturing related employment averaged about 11% of workers across the region and appeared most prominent in the districts of Montgomeryshire (21%), Aberconwy (19%), Dinefwr (19%), Ynys Mon (18%) and Glyndwr (18%). Around 9% of workers were engaged in the construction sector, with highest proportions of such workers recorded in Dwyfor (10%), Preseli (11%) and South Pembrokeshire (16%).

Table 2.28: Occupational structure for all persons in employment in rural Wales - by district, 1981 (percentages)

	Ag., for. & fish.	Energy & water	Man.	Con. & cat'g	Distrib. & com.	Trans. services	Other services	All
Colwyn	6.1	2.0	16.2	7.5	25.2	4.7	37.6	67.5
Glyndwr	13.0	1.4	17.5	7.7	20.0	3.8	35.0	58.8
Carmarthen	17.2	3.3	9.8	7.8	18.6	7.2	35.2	61.0
Ceredigion	17.0	2.1	8.4	9.1	19.3	4.3	38.8	62.4
Dinefwr	13.3	12.5	19.0	7.3	16.4	4.7	26.0	47.1
Preseli	11.3	6.6	8.8	10.9	20.7	7.2	33.1	61.0
South Pembrokeshire	8.4	9.6	8.2	15.8	26.3	5.1	25.0	56.4
Aberconwy	5.7	1.7	19.3	8.4	27.4	5.4	36.5	69.3
Arfon	2.6	3.0	16.3	9.5	18.4	5.2	32.5	56.1
Dwyfor	15.8	2.9	8.8	10.0	26.6	5.3	29.2	61.1
Meirionnydd	11.9	6.4	9.6	7.7	22.6	4.5	24.7	51.8
Ynys Mon	6.7	4.7	17.9	8.3	16.4	8.7	36.0	61.1
Brecknock	13.3	8.3	11.9	6.2	17.8	2.6	39.0	59.4
Montgomeryshire	21.3	1.6	20.6	6.5	17.2	5.1	26.9	49.2
Radnorshire	24.2	1.2	15.0	8.5	16.1	5.4	28.4	49.4
Rural Wales	12.5	6.1	10.8	9.1	21.0	5.7	34.8	61.5

Source: 1981 Census

A gender breakdown of the region's occupational structure is presented in Table 2.29. Whilst it is evident that a majority of both male and female workers were engaged in service related occupations in 1981, a much higher proportion of women were engaged in such occupations (83%) than men (47%). Greater numbers of male workers were engaged in the 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' (16%/5%), 'energy and water' (7%/1%), manufacturing (16%/11%) and construction (13%/1%) sectors.

Table 2.29: Occupational classification of persons in employment by gender - rural Wales, 1981 (percentages)

	All	Men	Women
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	12.5	16.4	5.0
Energy and water	6.1	6.6	0.9
Manufacturing	10.8	16.2	10.7
Construction	9.1	13.4	0.9
Distribution and catering	21.0	16.1	28.4
Transport and communication	5.7	7.4	2.3
Other services	34.8	23.9	51.8
All services	61.5	47.4	82.5

Source: 1981 Census

As noted earlier, until the 1991 Census 10% employment statistics become available, analysis of employment change in rural Wales through the 1980s is restricted to the Censuses of Employment, a survey of employees conducted tri-annually, and more recently bi-annually by the Department of the Employment. This section examines sectoral changes in employment between 1981 and 1989 (the latest published survey) in the counties of Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys. It should be noted that the Census of Employment is concerned with employees only and excludes persons self-employed. Thus it undercounts occupations and sectors characterised by high levels of self-employment - farming, hotel ownership, small craft work, etc.

Table 2.30 highlights changes in employment in the three counties of rural Wales between 1981-89 across eight broad occupational sectors. The service sector dominated employment growth across the 1980s with a growth rate of 19%. Within this sector, growth levels of more than 25% were recorded in the 'distribution, hotels and catering' and 'other services' sub-sectors. Only one other employment sector (manufacturing) recorded an increase in employees in the 1981-89 period, with this growth level restricted to around 3%. The number of employees engaged in the 'farming, forestry and fishing' sector fell by more than 9%, whilst the construction and 'energy and water' sectors recorded reductions in workforce sizes of 19% and 31% respectively between 1981-89.

Table 2.30: Employees broken down by industry - rural Wales, 1981-89

	1981	1989	change 1981-89 no.s	%age
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	16 000	14 500	-1 500	-9.4
Energy and water supply	11 000	7 600	-3 400	-30.9
Manufacturing industries	35 600	36 600	+1 000	+2.8
Construction	12 200	9 900	-2 300	-18.9
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	39 900	50 600	+10 700	+26.8
Transport, communication, banking and finance	22 100	24 800	+2 700	+12.2
Public administration and defence	33 700	32 400	-1 300	-3.9
Other service industries	32 200	44 300	+12 100	+37.6
<i>All services</i>	<i>127 900</i>	<i>152 100</i>	<i>+23 800</i>	<i>+18.6</i>
Total	202 700	220 700	+180 000	+8.9

Source: NOMIS

2.44 The geography of sectoral change

Agricultural and related employment decline was witnessed in the counties of Dyfed and Gwynedd, with a small growth in such employment recorded in Powys. Growth in the manufacturing sector was greatest in Powys (30%), with a smaller rise reported in Gwynedd (4%) and a loss of 9% witnessed in the county of Dyfed. Levels of construction related employment fell in each county in the 1981-89 period. By far the largest increase in service sector employment was recorded in Powys (34%), with the counties of Dyfed and Gwynedd each registering increases of around 16% (Table 2.31).

Table 2.31: Percentage change in employees, broken down by industry 1981-89 - Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys

	Dyfed	Gwynedd	Powys
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	-13.5	-12.1	+2.6
Energy and water supply	-43.0	0.0	-31.6
Manufacturing industries	-8.8	+3.5	+30.0
Construction	-24.6	-12.5	-15.4
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	+19.3	+29.4	+43.6
Transport, communication, banking and finance	+9.8	+8.8	+31.0
Public administration and defence	-2.1	-9.7	+5.9
Other service industries	+44.6	+28.6	+39.7

Source: NOMIS

The outcome of these occupational shifts is presented in Table 2.32. By 1989, the service sector accounted for more than two-thirds of employees in Gwynedd and Dyfed, and around 63% of all paid workers in Powys. The next most important sector in each county was manufacturing, which accounted for around 22% of employees in Powys, and roughly 15% of such workers in the counties of Dyfed and Gwynedd. Agriculture, forestry and fishing accounted for less than 10% of the paid workforce in each of the three rural counties.

Table 2.32: The employment structure in Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys - 1989 (percentages)

	Dyfed	Gwynedd	Powys
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	7.5	3.8	9.6
Energy and water supply	3.6	3.4	3.2
Manufacturing industries	15.2	15.5	22.3
Construction	4.5	5.5	2.7
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	21.0	27.4	19.4
Transport, communication, banking and finance	12.0	11.3	9.3
Public administration and defence	18.1	13.2	8.8
Other service industries	18.3	19.9	25.0
<i>All services</i>	<i>69.4</i>	<i>71.8</i>	<i>62.5</i>

Source: NOMIS

Whilst it has been shown that the service sector dominated the 1989 employment structure in each county, the degree of domination varied between male and female employment, and full- and part-time work. As can be seen from Table 2.33, the service sector was most prominent amongst female part-time employees, accounting for over 90% of such workers. Services accounted for over two-thirds of all part-time male workers in each county, with 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' comprising between 11-26% of male part-timers. The remaining sectors together made up less than 5% of the occupations of part-time men in employment.

Services accounted for between 64% to 80% of female full-time workers in rural Wales in 1989, with manufacturing - the next most dominant sector - comprising 16% of full-time women workers in Gwynedd, around 17% in Dyfed, and 30% of such workers in

the county of Powys. No other sector accounted for more than 5% of the workforce in each county.

Male full-time employment was the least dominated by the service sector. Here, services accounted for between 47% and 55% of all employment across the three rural counties. Manufacturing made up roughly 21% of full-time men in Dyfed, 22% in Gwynedd and about 28% of such workers in Powys. The 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' sector accounted for around 26% of male full-time workers living in Powys, 20% in Dyfed, and 6% of such workers in the county of Gwynedd. Roughly 11% of male full-time workers in Gwynedd were employed in the construction sector, whilst around 6% of such workers in each county were engaged in occupations within the 'energy and water' sector.

Table 2.33: Employment sectoral percentage change, 1981-89 - Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys

Dyfed	<u>men</u>		<u>women</u>	
	FT	PT	FT	PT
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	10.3	19.6	4.7	1.8
Energy and water supply	6.7	0.0	0.8	0.5
Manufacturing industries	20.8	2.2	16.5	3.6
Construction	8.1	4.3	0.8	0.9
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	14.5	34.8	17.6	36.9
Transport, communication, banking and finance	15.6	8.7	11.4	4.5
Public administration and defence	15.2	15.2	22.7	19.4
Other service industries	8.9	15.2	25.1	32.4
<i>All services</i>	<i>54.2</i>	<i>73.9</i>	<i>76.8</i>	<i>93.2</i>
Gwynedd	<u>men</u>		<u>women</u>	
	FT	PT	FT	PT
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5.7	11.4	1.1	0.6
Energy and water supply	6.3	0.0	1.6	0.6
Manufacturing industries	22.1	2.3	15.9	3.5
Construction	10.7	2.3	0.5	0.6
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	18.0	50.0	24.3	44.4
Transport, communication, banking and finance	14.8	6.8	11.1	6.4
Public administration and defence	12.8	13.6	18.5	8.2
Other service industries	9.8	13.6	26.5	35.7
<i>All services</i>	<i>55.4</i>	<i>84.0</i>	<i>80.4</i>	<i>94.7</i>

Powys		men			women	
		FT	PT		FT	PT
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	14.1	26.1		2.9	2.2	
Energy and water supply		5.8	0.0		1.0	0.0
Manufacturing industries		27.7	4.3		29.8	6.6
Construction		5.2	0.0		0.0	1.1
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs		14.7	26.1		19.2	27.5
Transport, communication, banking and finance		11.0	8.7		8.7	6.6
Public administration and defence		10.5	17.4		7.7	4.4
Other service industries		10.5	17.4		28.8	52.7
<i>All services</i>		46.7	69.6		64.4	91.2

Source: NOMIS

2.45 Redundancies

A further insight into the characteristics of employment decline can be gleaned from an analysis of redundancies notified to the Employment Service. Table 2.34 presents such statistics for the counties of Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys in the twelve month period January 1991 - January 1992. Considering the three counties together, it is clear that in this 12 month period seven out of ten redundancies in rural Wales were concentrated in three occupational sectors: extraction and manufacturing (31%); metal goods and vehicle industries (24%); and agriculture, forestry and fishing (15%). Thus, whilst recognising the temporal specificity of these statistics, it can be suggested that the manufacturing sector - perceived as the main catalyst behind employment growth in rural Wales - has witnessed a recent decline in its workforce. Whether such figures form part of a wider trend of manufacturing decline remains, as yet, unclear.

Table 2.34: Redundancies notified to job centres by industrial sector - rural Wales, Jan. 1991 - Jan. 1992

	no.	%age
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	320	14.9
Energy and water supply	180	8.4
Extraction, manufacturing	667	31.0
Metal goods, vehicle industries	521	24.2
Other manufacturing	60	2.8
Construction	56	2.6
Distribution, hotels & catering	203	9.4
Transport, communication	0	0.0
Banking, finance	144	6.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>2151</i>	

Source: Employment Service

2.46 Unemployment

Closely linked to job losses and redundancies is unemployment. This section charts temporal changes and spatial variations in official unemployment levels in travel-to-work areas (TTWAs) within rural Wales between 1984-91.

In April 1991, the Census of Population recorded over 27 000 persons unemployed within the rural region, with unemployment levels much higher amongst men (1 in 10) than amongst women (1 in 16). In terms of the geography of unemployment, levels for both men and women were highest in the western districts of South Pembrokeshire, Arfon, Ynys Mon and Preseli. Lowest rates were recorded in the more accessible, predominantly eastern, districts of Brecknock, Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire, Glyndwr and Carmarthen (Table 2.35).

Table 2.35: Unemployed persons as percentage of total workforce in rural Wales - by district, 1991.

<u>male unemployment rates</u>		<u>female unemployment rates</u>	
Arfon	14.7	Ynys Mon	8.9
South Pembrokeshire	14.0	South Pembrokeshire	8.8
Ynys Mon	13.4	Arfon	8.4
Preseli	12.0	Preseli	7.3
Dinefwr	11.3	Meirionnydd	7.1
Dwyfor	10.8	Dwyfor	6.9
Colwyn	10.2	Colwyn	6.2
Aberconwy	10.1	Dinefwr	6.1
Meirionnydd	9.7	Aberconwy	5.8
Ceredigion	8.5	Ceredigion	5.7
Carmarthen	8.3	Glyndwr	5.4
Brecknock	7.9	Carmarthen	5.0
Glyndwr	7.4	Montgomeryshire	4.5
Montgomeryshire	6.9	Radnorshire	4.5
Radnorshire	6.0	Brecknock	4.2
Rural Wales mean	10.1	Rural Wales mean	6.3

Source: 1991 Census

A more detailed indication of the scale of unemployment within rural Wales is provided by monthly statistics published by the Department of Employment in Employment Gazette. Whilst the annual proportion of unemployed persons in the region fell consistently between 1985-1990 before rising slightly in June 1991, the unemployment rate for rural Wales remained above the average recorded for Great Britain as a whole (Table 2.36). This said, there exist considerable variations in the level of unemployment within rural Wales.

Table 2.36: Rates of unemployment in rural Wales expressed as a percentage of the total workforce (average of June and December levels), 1985-1991

	Rural Wales	Great Britain
1985	16.9	13.2
1986	16.5	12.9
1987	15.9	11.1
1988	12.0	8.6
1989	8.6	6.6
1990	7.9	6.8
1991 (June only)	9.9	9.0

Source: Employment Gazette

Table 2.37 highlights that unemployment levels in some areas of rural Wales were amongst the highest in the whole of England and Wales in 1990. This is particularly true in the winter months when the differential between mean levels in rural Wales and Great Britain was greatest. In June 1990, 6 travel-to-work areas (TTWAs) in rural Wales were amongst the 40 areas in England and Wales with the highest recorded unemployment levels (out of 262 TTWAs). By December of the same year, the number of TTWAs in rural Wales in the 'top forty' had risen to nine. Indeed, the TTWAs of Pwllheli and South Pembrokeshire recorded unemployment rates that ranked sixth and eighth highest respectively in the whole of England and Wales. Widening the discussion beyond rural Wales, to include areas of rural England, it is also clear from Table 2.37 that in December 1991, six of the ten TTWAs with the highest levels of unemployment could be described as 'rural', with Skegness ranked alongside South Tyneside, Pwllheli alongside Hartlepool, and Redruth and Cambourne alongside Liverpool.

Table 2.37: The 10 travel-to-work areas with highest unemployment levels in England and Wales, June and December 1990 (percentages)

June 1990			December 1990		
1	South Tyneside	15.8	1	<u>Newquay</u>	20.7
2	Hartlepool	15.3	2	<u>Skegness</u>	18.8
3	Liverpool	13.5	3	South Tyneside	17.8
4	Rotherham & Mexborough	12.5	4	<u>Helston</u>	17.4
5	Middlesborough	12.3	5	<u>Penzance & St. Ives</u>	16.4
6	Aberdare	12.1	6	<u>Pwllheli</u>	16.0
7	Sunderland	11.8	7	Hartlepool	15.6
8	Stockton-on-Tees	11.5	8	<u>South Pembrokeshire</u>	15.0
9	<u>Holyhead</u>	11.3	9	<u>Redruth & Cambourne</u>	14.9
10	<u>Penzance & St. Ives</u>	10.7	10	Liverpool	14.3

note - rural TTWAs underlined; those in rural Wales in bold

Source: Employment Gazette

Geographical variations within rural Wales are highlighted in Table 2.38 which shows unemployment levels in June and December 1990. Two main points can be made regarding this table. Firstly, it is apparent that there is much internal variation between rankings in June and December, reflecting variations in the importance of tourism and

other seasonal employment opportunities between TTWAs. Secondly, several areas maintained their position at the extremes of the ranking in both months. The western and north-western TTWAs of Holyhead, South Pembrokeshire, Pwllheli and Bangor and Caernarfon recorded unemployment levels amongst the top five in rural Wales in each month, whilst lowest levels were witnessed in the more accessible, predominantly eastern, areas of Brecon, Welshpool, Newtown and Carmarthen (see Figure 2.2).

Table 2.38: Unemployment levels in rural Wales - by district, June and December 1990 (percentages)

<u>June 1990</u>		<u>December 1990</u>	
Holyhead	11.4	Pwllheli	16.0
Bangor & Caernarfon	10.5	South Pembrokeshire	15.0
South Pembrokeshire	9.6	Holyhead	14.1
Haverfordwest	9.0	Machynlleth	12.5
Pwllheli	9.0	Bangor & Caernarfon	12.1
Cardigan	8.7	Porthmadoc & Ffestiniog	11.4
Fishguard	7.0	Cardigan	11.1
Lampeter & Aberaeron	6.8	Haverfordwest	10.9
Dolgellau & Barmouth	6.4	Dolgellau & Barmouth	10.7
Machynlleth	6.4	Lampeter & Aberaeron	9.4
Conwy & Colwyn	6.1	Fishguard	8.5
Porthmadoc & Ffestiniog	6.1	Conwy & Colwyn	8.3
Denbigh	5.1	Llandrindod Wells	6.4
Aberystwyth	4.5	Denbigh	6.3
Llandeilo	4.5	Aberystwyth	6.2
Llandrindod Wells	4.4	Newtown	5.8
Carmarthen	3.7	Llandeilo	5.7
Welshpool	3.5	Brecon	5.3
Newtown	3.4	Carmarthen	4.9
Brecon	3.3	Welshpool	4.5
Rural Wales mean	6.5	Rural Wales mean	9.3
Wales mean	7.4	Wales mean	8.9
Great Britain mean	6.1	Great Britain mean	7.4

Source: Employment Gazette



Figure 2.2: Travel-to-work areas within rural Wales

2.47 Income levels

The final part of this employment section is concerned with changing levels of income within rural Wales. It draws on two main sources of earnings related information: the New Earnings Survey - published annually by the Department of Employment; and the Welsh Inter-Censal Survey - a 'one-off' survey conducted by the Welsh Office in 1986.

The processes of economic restructuring reported earlier in this section do not appear to have improved mean income levels within rural Wales in recent years. According to the New Earnings Survey, the average earnings of full-time male workers relative to the Great Britain mean fell between 1981-92 (Table 2.39). In Gwynedd, relative income levels fell from 90.7% of the GB mean in 1981 to 83.6% in 1992. In Powys, the corresponding income level decreased from 84.9% to 77.3%, whilst in rural Dyfed (all districts except Llanelli), the relative income level fell from 92.3% to 80.8% of the GB mean across the 1981-92 period. In Clwyd-West (mainly rural districts), more limited income data would seem to indicate a similar depression of relative wage levels - 93.7% to 82.1%.

Table 2.39: Gross weekly earnings as a percentage of the Great Britain mean, 1981-90 - full-time adult men (all occupations)

	<u>Clwyd West</u>	<u>Gwynedd</u>	<u>Powys</u>	<u>Rural Dyfed</u>	<u>Wales</u>	<u>Great Britain</u>
1981	93.7	90.7	84.9	92.3	94.4	100.0
1982	nd	87.2	nd	94.6	95.0	100.0
1983	nd	89.0	nd	90.0	93.3	100.0
1984	nd	90.7	nd	87.2	92.7	100.0
1985	nd	90.7	nd	89.6	93.1	100.0
1986	nd	87.3	nd	85.9	91.8	100.0
1987	84.3	86.5	nd	90.0	91.2	100.0
1988	79.9	83.0	77.8	81.5	88.6	100.0
1989	nd	nd	nd	83.9	88.5	100.0
1990	nd	84.0	74.7	83.4	87.5	100.0
1991	83.5	85.3	78.5	81.6	87.8	100.0
1992	82.1	83.6	77.3	80.8	87.7	100.0

Source: New Earnings Surveys 1981-92

A similar picture emerges in terms of the earnings of full-time women workers, albeit based on more restrictive data (Table 2.40). In rural Dyfed, for example, the average full-time wage fell from 91.8% of the GB mean in 1981 to 87.0% in 1991, although relative increases were recorded in the interim period. In Gwynedd, the relative mean income decreased from 89.2% in 1984 to 85.9% in 1991, although data is only available for four years. The absence of income data for Clwyd-West and Powys excludes them from such an analysis. Whilst recognising the limited nature of the income data on women's income levels, it would appear that the differential between the rural Wales and Great Britain mean income levels was less pronounced amongst women workers than their male counterparts. Furthermore, the relative position of women workers has depreciated much less than that witnessed amongst full-time men during the 1980s.

Table 2.40: Gross weekly earnings as a percentage of the Great Britain mean, 1981-90 - full-time adult women (all occupations)

	<u>Clwyd West</u>	<u>Gwynedd</u>	<u>Powys</u>	<u>Rural Dyfed</u>	<u>Wales</u>	<u>Great Britain</u>
1981	nd	nd	nd	91.8	95.7	100.0
1982	nd	nd	nd	nd	93.5	100.0
1983	nd	nd	nd	95.6	96.0	100.0
1984	nd	89.2	nd	95.2	94.8	100.0
1985	nd	nd	nd	94.9	94.0	100.0
1986	nd	89.1	nd	93.0	92.6	100.0
1987	nd	nd	nd	88.9	92.5	100.0
1988	nd	90.0	nd	88.7	91.5	100.0
1989	nd	89.2	nd	nd	92.2	100.0
1990	nd	nd	nd	nd	97.0	100.0
1991	85.1	85.9	nd	87.0	89.5	100.0
1992	nd	nd	nd	nd	95.1	100.0

Source: New Earnings Surveys 1981-92

The distribution of female gross weekly earnings in Clwyd-West, rural Dyfed and Gwynedd for 1991 is presented in Table 2.41. It is clear that a higher proportion of full-time women in the three rural counties earned less than £150 per week than in both Wales and Great Britain. Indeed, around 40% of full-time female workers in Clwyd-West, rural Dyfed and Gwynedd earning below £150 per week compared to only one-

quarter in Great Britain as a whole. At the other extreme of the earnings scale, between 15-20% of women in rural Wales earned more than £270 per week, considerably below the 25% of women recorded in Great Britain. A final point that needs to be made relates to the gender income differential within rural Wales. In Clwyd West and Gwynedd average female full-time earnings totalled only two-thirds of those recorded for men, whilst the mean female income in rural Dyfed was around 70% of the corresponding average wage for men. These gender inequalities within rural Wales appeared slightly higher than those recorded in Wales and Great Britain.

Table 2.41: Distribution of gross weekly earnings 1991 - full-time women employees (all occupations)

	percentage earning below			average gross	percentage of
	£150	£200	£270	weekly earnings	male earnings
Clwyd West	43.6	62.4	84.2	£189.20	67.7
Rural Dyfed	39.3	66.7	80.0	£193.50	70.4
Gwynedd	39.2	65.0	85.0	£191.10	67.2
Wales	32.6	61.6	80.9	£199.10	66.5
Great Britain	24.7	51.8	74.7	£222.40	65.4

Source: New Earnings Survey 1991

Table 2.42 highlights the distribution of male weekly earnings in 1992. A similar pattern to that reported for women is clearly obvious, with around one-third of male full-time workers in rural Dyfed, Gwynedd and Powys, and a quarter of such workers in Clwyd-West earning less than £200 per week. Only 19% of full-time men in Great Britain as a whole earned less than this figure in 1992. In terms of higher income levels, between 19-23% of male full-time workers in rural Wales earned more than £360 per week in 1992, compared with 33% of men in Great Britain.

Table 2.42: Distribution of gross weekly earnings 1992 - full-time men employees (all occupations)

	percentage earning below			average gross weekly earnings
	£200	£270	£360	
Clwyd West	24.8	54.3	79.1	£279.10
Rural Dyfed	33.2	60.8	78.4	£274.80
Gwynedd	33.7	56.2	77.1	£284.20
Powys	34.8	58.0	81.2	£262.90
Wales	24.0	49.5	75.0	£299.20
Great Britain	18.7	41.9	66.7	£340.10

Source: New Earnings Survey 1992

It was mentioned in the introduction to this income section that a second source of income data was available. The 1986 Welsh Inter-Censal Survey provides household income data at the district level, part of which is shown in Table 2.43. The survey highlights that around 43% of households in rural Wales earned less than £4 000 per annum - an identical proportion to that recorded for the whole of Wales. Within the rural region, low incomes were most prominent in the north-west - Aberconwy, Arfon and Dwyfor - where between 47-51% of households earned annual incomes of less than £4 000. Slightly fewer households in rural Wales earned £12 000 or more per annum compared to Wales as a whole (13.7%/15.5%). Highest proportions of such households were recorded in the districts of Brecknock, Glyndwr, Montgomeryshire, Preseli and Ynys Mon - where over 15% of households earned at least £12 000 per year.

Table 2.43: Gross household annual incomes below £4 000 and at least £12 000 in rural Wales - by district, 1986

• below £4 000 per annum		£12 000 and over per annum	
Dinefwr	50.9	Brecknock	18.8
Arfon	48.4	Ynys Mon	18.1
Aberconwy	47.0	Preseli	16.3
Dwyfor	46.5	Montgomeryshire	15.3
Glyndwr	43.3	Glyndwr	15.1
Carmarthen	42.3	Colwyn	14.1
Colwyn	42.2	South Pembrokeshire	14.1
Preseli	42.1	Ceredigion	13.7
Ceredigion	41.9	Carmarthen	12.8
South Pembrokeshire	40.7	Dinefwr	12.3
Radnorshire	39.5	Radnorshire	12.2
Ynys Mon	39.4	Dwyfor	11.2
Meirionnydd	38.5	Meirionnydd	10.9
Brecknock	38.2	Arfon	10.5
Montgomeryshire	36.3	Aberconwy	9.5
Rural Wales mean	42.5	Rural Wales mean	13.7
Wales mean	42.7	Wales mean	15.5

Source: Welsh Inter-Censal Survey

2.5 Summary

Chapter Two has highlighted recent processes of restructuring that have taken place within rural Wales. It has demonstrated that dramatic changes have occurred within the labour market and the population structure of the rural region across the 1980s, with such changes exhibiting marked geographical variations.

Population change - the resident population of rural Wales increased by more than 37 000 persons, or 5.6% between 1981-91 - ranging from 1-13% across districts. The vast majority of population growth resulted from a net rate of in-movement - accounting for an increase of 55 000 people across the 1980s. Population growth levels increased through the 1980s and peaked in the 1986-88 period. A slight population reduction was recorded in 1990-91 for rural Wales as a whole, although seven districts continued to register a slight population increase.

The Census recorded 64 000 persons moving to their present place of residence in the twelve months period 1990-91 - representing 9% of the total population. Whilst the majority of this in-movement was characterised by short distance relocations, around one-quarter of all in-movers had originated from areas outside Wales, and particularly from the English regions. Roughly three-quarters of 'outside Wales' in-movement involved persons aged under 45 years, with a clear majority of such people aged under 30 years. Such a finding was seen as an indication of a young, family-type in-movement to areas of rural Wales.

Although the region witnessed an overall in-movement of persons, there still remained a net out-movement of young people from rural Wales, with each rural county reporting a net out-migration of 15-29 year olds in the 1990-91 period.

The vast majority of population movements to and from counties in rural Wales during 1990-91 involved areas of England, particularly the South-East (in the cases of Dyfed and Powys) and the North-West (Gwynedd) regions.

Employment change - considerable employment growth was recorded within rural Wales across the 1980s, with the number of persons in employment increasing by around 11% across the decade, and by more than 20% in four districts. By the late 1980s, the rural economy was dominated by the service sector, accounting for almost 70% of all employees within the region. Employment losses were recorded in the agriculture, forestry and fishing and construction sectors across the 1980s, whilst a slight increase in manufacturing employment was reported.

The mean rate of unemployment in rural Wales was consistently higher than the corresponding level recorded for Great Britain. Within the region, however, considerable geographical variations were evident, with lowest rates for the whole of Wales recorded in eastern areas.

Finally, average income levels within rural Wales were much lower than the Welsh and Great Britain means. Such a situation was equally true for both working men and women, with evidence also suggesting a growing divide between national and rural Wales average income levels across the 1980s. Within rural Wales, highest proportions of low-income households were recorded in north-western areas.

Thus, it can be seen that, in general terms, population in-movement over the 1980s has produced a situation in which an increased number of people are seeking housing within rural Wales. In addition, the structure of local employment has important ramifications

for the rural housing market, since low incomes and poor quality, part-time employment affect the ability of many workers to secure private housing. Economic restructuring has also excluded some workers, predominantly those engaged in traditional occupations, from the formal labour market, which again limits their housing opportunities. However, the changing nature and intensity of competition for rural housing needs to be considered alongside the changing provision of housing in the countryside. Chapter Three examines the restructuring of housing provision in rural Wales over recent years.

CHAPTER THREE: HOUSING IN THE WELSH COUNTRYSIDE

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter considered how changes in socio-economic structures of rural areas were influencing the composition of groups within rural housing markets. In many ways, Chapter Two was concerned with the changing demand or competition for housing in the Welsh countryside. The present chapter focuses on the issue of rural housing itself, and is sub-divided into three main parts:

- (i) the changing structure of housing in rural Wales - tenure, new provision, price, leisure homes, planning applications and housing conditions;
- (ii) the incidence and nature of housing need;
- (iii) the housing debate within rural Wales - perceived causes and consequences of a lack of affordable housing, policy responses to the rural affordability problem, and implementation of proposed housing solutions.

3.2 The changing structure of housing in rural Wales

3.21 Housing tenure

As a result of the 1980s housing legislation, rural Wales has witnessed a radical transformation in the structure of housing tenure over recent years. In short, the private sector has become more dominant as cuts in council housebuilding programmes and the Right-to-Buy sales introduced in the 1980 Housing Act have dramatically reduced the public rental housing stock (Table 3.1). By 1991, seven out of ten households in rural

Wales were owner-occupiers, an increase of 36% since 1981. By contrast, the number of households living in local authority or new town rented properties fell from 25% to 15% in this 1981-91 period.

Housing associations, given the role of social housing 'provider' by the 1980s housing legislation, failed to make any real impact on the housing tenure structure of the region across the 1980s. In fact, by 1991, housing association dwellings accounted for only 1.7% of the total rural housing stock in Wales, compared to 0.6% in 1981. Although such increased housing association provision represented a rise of more than 200% in the 1981-91 period, in real terms, this amounted to an increase of only 3 230 dwellings, and paled into significance when compared to the 17 445 public sector dwellings 'lost' in the same ten year period.

Private rented housing, the once dominant tenure of the region, accounted for slightly less than 12% of the total stock in 1991, and comprised unfurnished dwellings (5.3%), furnished properties (3.6%), and dwellings rented with a job or business (2.7%). Whilst, in overall terms, the private rented sector shrank from 13.3% in 1981, there were considerable variations within the sector. Both the number of unfurnished properties and those rented by virtue of employment fell through the 1980s, whilst furnished dwellings showed an increased share of the housing market from 2.3% in 1981 to 3.6% in 1991. Such a rise may reflect government policies contained within the Housing Act 1988 which aimed to revitalise the private rented sector by making investment more attractive to potential landlords.

Table 3.1: Household tenure in rural Wales - 1981, 1991 and change 1981-91 (percentages)

	1981	1991	1981-91
owner-occupied	60.6	70.2	+36.2
local authority or new town rented	24.5	14.7	-29.3
housing association rented	0.6	1.7	+215.2
private rented - furnished	2.3	3.6	+82.7
private rented - unfurnished	7.7	5.3	-19.8
rented with job or business	3.3	2.7	-5.1

Source: 1991 Census

So far, such tenorial shifts have only been considered in relation to rural Wales as a whole. Clearly, these changes have been geographically uneven, with different areas, for a variety of reasons, having different mixes of housing. The next section examines the geography of both the present (1991) tenure make-up, and the decennial changes in tenure structure, by drawing on district level Census data for 1981 and 1991.

Owner-occupation

In 1991, across all districts in rural Wales, a clear majority of households 'owned' their homes. Levels of ownership ranged from 65.2% of households in Arfon to 75.3% in Colwyn (see Table 3.2). Indeed, including Colwyn, seven districts (Aberconwy, Carmarthen, Ceredigion, Dinefwr, Glyndwr and Meirionnydd being the others) reported owner-occupation levels of 70% and over in 1991. Increases in the level of owner-occupation across the 1981-91 period tended to be greatest in the eastern districts of Montgomeryshire, Glyndwr, Radnorshire and Brecknock, and in South Pembrokeshire. This said, in ten districts the number of owner-occupier households increased by more than one-third during the 1980s. The greatest rise in such households was reported in the district of Montgomeryshire (52.6%), with Dwyfor recording the smallest growth rate of 28.3%.

Table 3.2: Percentage of households in owner-occupation - 1991 and 1981-91 change

	<u>1991</u>	<u>percentage change</u>	<u>1981-91</u>
Colwyn	75.3	Montgomeryshire	52.6
Dinefwr	74.6	South Pembrokeshire	43.2
Aberconwy	74.3	Glyndwr	42.3
Carmarthen	72.5	Radnorshire	42.0
Meirionnydd	71.7	Brecknock	40.1
Ceredigion	71.3	Meirionnydd	38.3
Glyndwr	70.0	Ceredigion	37.6
Brecknock	69.7	Preseli	37.0
Dwyfor	69.4	Aberconwy	34.6
South Pembrokeshire	68.8	Ynys Mon	34.1
Ynys Mon	68.6	Colwyn	31.4
Preseli	68.1	Carmarthen	31.4
Radnorshire	67.2	Arfon	28.9
Montgomeryshire	65.4	Dinefwr	28.8
Arfon	65.2	Dwyfor	28.8
Rural Wales	70.2	Rural Wales	36.2

Source: 1991 Census

Local authority and new town housing

By 1991, only one district in rural Wales - Arfon - had more than one-fifth of its households living in public rental housing (Table 3.3). In fact, public sector provision in six districts (Colwyn, Aberconwy, Ceredigion, Meirionnydd, Radnorshire, and Dwyfor) accounted for less than 15% of all households. Whilst, in many of these districts, local authority housing provision has historically been at levels below the national average, in some the present situation has resulted more from the recent Right-to-Buy legislation and restrictions on council house building programmes.

In the 1981-91 period, almost three out of ten public sector dwellings had been lost to the private sector, with depletion rates of 38% and 33% recorded in Aberconwy and Brecknock respectively. Only two districts - Ceredigion and Dwyfor - witnessed reductions of less than 20% in their council house provision through the 1980s.

Table 3.3: Percentage of households renting from local authorities or new towns in rural Wales, 1991 and 1981-91

	<u>1991</u>	<u>percentage change</u>	<u>1981-91</u>
Arfon	21.9	Aberconwy	-37.8
Preseli	18.8	Brecknock	-33.0
Ynys Mon	18.7	Glyndwr	-31.2
Montgomeryshire	18.6	Preseli	-28.6
Glyndwr	16.2	Radnorshire	-27.0
South Pembrokeshire	15.9	Meirionnydd	-26.8
Brecknock	15.6	Dinefwr	-25.4
Carmarthen	15.1	South Pembrokeshire	-25.2
Dinefwr	15.0	Montgomeryshire	-24.8
Meirionnydd	14.4	Ceredigion	-22.9
Dwyfor	12.7	Ynys Mon	-21.7
Radnorshire	12.0	Colwyn	-21.2
Ceredigion	11.8	Arfon	-20.2
Aberconwy	11.2	Carmarthen	-19.1
Colwyn	10.5	Dwyfor	-19.0
Rural Wales	14.7	Rural Wales	-29.3

Source: 1991 Census

Housing association provision

As mentioned in an earlier section, figures for rural Wales would seem to suggest that housing associations have not been able to stem the haemorrhage of social housing provision during the 1980s. Whilst it cannot be denied that housing association provision increased dramatically during this period - ranging from a 79% increase in Aberconwy to an almost 800% increase in Carmarthen - such increases represented relatively small numbers of dwellings, since stock levels were so low in 1981 (see Table 3.4). For example, the massive percentage increase recorded in Carmarthen represented an addition of just 333 dwellings, whereas the reduction in local authority provision totalled 763 dwellings. Thus, in the district with the largest growth in housing association stock, such growth was less than half the level of council house losses. At the other extreme, Aberconwy witnessed a loss of 1 163 local authority dwellings, but gained only 204 housing association dwellings, an overall reduction of some 959 social housing units.

That housing associations have had a minimal impact on the housing system is also confirmed by Table 3.4 which shows the overall tenure position in 1991. Housing

association provision accounted for more than 2% of total stock in only six districts within rural Wales. Indeed, in the districts of Meirionnydd and Ynys Mon, less than 1% of households were residing in association dwellings. In terms of the geography of such provision, a greater proportion of housing association dwellings were recorded in the more accessible north-east region (Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire, Colwyn and Glyndwr).

Table 3.4: Percentage of households renting from housing associations in rural Wales, 1991 and 1981-91

	<u>1981</u>	<u>percentage change</u>	<u>1981-91</u>
Radnorshire	2.3	Carmarthen	333
Montgomeryshire	2.2	Montgomeryshire	325
Arfon	2.2	Colwyn	314
Colwyn	2.2	Arfon	311
Glyndwr	2.1	Glyndwr	270
Aberconwy	2.1	Ceredigion	253
Brecknock	1.9	Preseli	248
Carmarthen	1.7	Brecknock	227
Dwyfor	1.5	Aberconwy	204
Ceredigion	1.4	Radnorshire	145
Dinefwr	1.4	South Pembrokeshire	139
South Pembrokeshire	1.3	Dinefwr	137
Preseli	1.1	Ynys Mon	123
Meirionnydd	0.9	Dwyfor	122
Ynys Mon	0.9	Meirionnydd	79
Rural Wales	1.7	Rural Wales	215

Source: 1991 Census

Private rented housing

Figures presented earlier for the whole of rural Wales appeared to indicate an increase in furnished dwellings, and reductions in unfurnished and employment-related rentals through the 1980s. Such a trend is confirmed at the district level, with all fifteen districts in the region showing increased levels of furnished private rental dwellings - ranging from 46.5% in Ynys Mon to 138.8% in Dinefwr. Such dwellings appeared most prominent in the districts of Ceredigion (6.5%), Arfon (5.0%), South Pembrokeshire (4.8%) and Aberconwy (4.5%) (Table 3.5).

Whilst the proportion of unfurnished private rental dwellings was higher than furnished rentals in all districts, each district recorded a reduction in such properties between 1981-91. Such losses ranged from 2.2% in South Pembrokeshire to 32.7% in Dinefwr. Unfurnished rentals were most pronounced in the districts of Radnorshire (8.9%), Dwyfor (8.2%) and Montgomeryshire (7.3%), whilst least important in Arfon (3.4%) and Preseli (3.5%). Geographical variations in the distribution of unfurnished rental properties appear to correspond to the relative importance of farming related employment within each district.

The geographical distribution of tied accommodation - dwellings rented with a job or business - appear to be unrelated to patterns of farming within rural Wales. Such a non-correlation may relate to restructuring within the agricultural sector in the 1980s (employment statistics used have been taken from the 1981 Census), as agricultural workers are made redundant and tied accommodation is sold on the open property market. The distribution may also be related to the growth of tourism-related employment, in which employers and employees may reside within the business premises. In the majority of districts, tied accommodation appeared less important than the other two types of private rental, and most prominent in the three districts of Powys: Brecknock (4.2%); Montgomeryshire (3.7%); and Radnorshire (3.7%). In terms of change over time during the 1980s considerable geographical variation was evident across the region. Eight districts, including all in Dyfed, recorded losses in tied housing, six witnessed a growth in such dwellings, and the district of Ynys Mon noted no change in tied provision.

Table 3.5: Percentage of households renting from the private sector in rural Wales, 1991 and percentage change 1981-91

	<u>furnished</u>		<u>unfurnished</u>		<u>rented with job or business</u>	
	1991	1981-91	1991	1981-91	1991	1981-91
Colwyn	3.6	65.2	6.5	-11.0	1.7	1.4
Glyndwr	2.3	95.4	6.2	-15.8	2.9	-14.2
Carmarthen	2.8	66.7	4.1	-28.7	2.2	-16.0
Ceredigion	6.5	92.3	5.0	-28.3	2.3	-6.5
Dinefwr	1.9	138.8	4.1	-32.7	1.7	-12.6
Preseli	3.7	87.6	3.5	-24.2	3.4	-11.7
South Pembrokeshire	4.8	106.6	4.9	-2.2	2.5	-9.6
Aberconwy	4.5	96.4	5.4	-22.1	2.0	3.8
Arfon	5.0	82.8	3.4	-28.9	1.7	4.7
Dwyfor	3.4	112.2	8.2	-27.5	3.2	22.3
Meirionnydd	3.5	89.7	5.9	-16.8	2.6	-17.6
Ynys Mon	3.2	46.5	4.8	-13.2	3.1	0.0
Brecknock	2.6	53.5	5.3	-23.2	4.2	-8.7
Montgomeryshire	1.8	68.7	7.3	-14.2	3.7	3.7
Radnorshire	2.9	109.1	8.9	-4.3	3.7	5.4
Rural Wales	3.6	82.7	5.3	-19.8	2.7	-5.1

Source: 1991 Census

So far, this section has examined the tenure breakdown in 1991, and tenurial change across the 1980s using data drawn from the Censuses of Population. The next section looks at the mechanisms behind such change in more detail. It focuses on the provision of new dwellings, and the contribution of local authorities, housing associations and the private sector.

3.22 The provision of new housing

The private sector not only dominates the existing housing market, but also accounts for the majority of new dwellings. In 1991, over three-quarters of new properties completed in rural Wales were constructed by private building companies for sale (Table 3.6). The level of private new builds in rural Wales was slightly higher than that recorded for the whole of Wales (76% compared to 72%). Housing associations contributed roughly one-

fifth of new dwellings completed in rural Wales during 1991, whilst local authorities and the DBRW were only able to contribute around 4% of new provision. Both housing association and local authority new builds in 1991 were at lower levels in rural areas than the average for Wales as a whole (20.4% and 3.6% compared to 23.5% and 4.0% respectively). The level of housebuilding, expressed as the number of completed properties per 1,000 households, was highest in the more peripheral north-eastern and eastern districts - Colwyn, Glyndwr, Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Brecknock, whilst the districts of Meirionnydd (4.7) and Dwyfor (5.0), both in Gwynedd, recorded the lowest rates of house construction in 1991 - less than one-fifth the level recorded in Colwyn (26.0%).

The dominance of the private sector in terms of new housing construction across the region is also highlighted in Table 3.6. In eleven districts, the private sector accounted for over three-quarters of new constructions in 1991. Indeed, in Dinefwr, private developments made up almost 96% of all new housing, whilst in the districts of Colwyn and Carmarthen the private sector constructed 88% and 84% respectively of all new dwellings completed in 1991. Only Meirionnydd, the district with the lowest house construction rate, witnessed the construction of less than half of all new dwellings by the private sector. Housing association activity was generally small-scale, and in 11 of the 15 districts associations provided less than one-quarter of all new dwellings. The sector appeared most important in the districts of Meirionnydd (41%) and South Pembrokeshire (35%), and least prominent in Dinefwr and Dwyfor, where associations contributed only 4% and 7% respectively of new properties in 1991. The impact of central government restrictions on capital receipts from council house sales is apparent from Table 3.6. Only six authorities in rural Wales constructed any housing in 1991, with these constructions totalling only 107 dwellings. Local authority construction levels were greatest in the districts of Meirionnydd (20%), Dwyfor (15%) and Ceredigion (13%).

Table 3.6: Percentage of new dwellings constructed by the public and private sector in rural Wales, 1991.

	private sector	housing associations	local authorities or new towns	rate per 1 000 households
Colwyn	87.9	12.1	0.0	26.0
Glyndwr	75.7	24.3	0.0	13.9
Carmarthen	84.0	16.0	0.0	8.3
Ceredigion	68.3	18.7	13.0	11.8
Dinefwr	95.7	4.3	0.0	12.0
Preseli	65.5	25.6	8.9	7.4
South Pembrokeshire	65.3	34.7	0.0	11.3
Aberconwy	77.8	22.2	0.0	11.0
Arfon	75.0	24.4	0.6	7.9
Dwyfor	77.8	7.4	14.8	5.0
Meirionnydd	39.3	41.0	19.7	4.7
Ynys Mon	76.0	24.0	0.0	11.6
Brecknock	75.1	24.9	0.0	12.5
Montgomeryshire	77.4	13.1	9.5	16.4
Radnorshire	75.4	24.6	0.0	13.2
Rural Wales	76.0	20.4	3.6	11.5
Wales	72.4	23.5	4.0	9.4

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1992)

The changing nature of house construction through the 1980s is highlighted in Table 3.7.

In general terms, it is clear that the private sector has increasingly dominated housing construction through the 1980s - from 75% of new houses between 1981-85, to 84% of new builds in the 1986-91 period. Indeed, private sector completions rose during the 1980s and peaked in 1989 when 3 000 properties were constructed. Since then, private sector completions have been at a marginally lower rate. By contrast, local authority housing completions in the 1981-85 period were almost four times greater than those recorded between 1986-91, with the peak year for public sector completions being 1981 when 780 properties were constructed. The trend regarding housing association completions is the opposite to that exhibited by local authorities, in that completions in the 1986-91 period were more than double the rate for 1981-85. Housing association new builds rose continually from 1985, and in 1991 - the peak year for new constructions - housing association completions outnumbered those by local authorities by a ratio of almost six to one.

Table 3.7: The changing nature of housing construction in rural Wales, 1981-85 and 1986-91

	1981-85		1986-91	
	no.	%age	no.	%age
private sector	8 123	75.4	13 991	84.3
local authorities	2 132	19.8	878	5.3
and new towns				
housing associations	525	4.9	1 736	10.5
<i>all</i>	<i>10 780</i>		<i>16 605</i>	

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1982, 1992)

3.23 The condition of the housing stock

It was suggested in Chapter One that housing conditions no longer represent a significant issue in rural areas and have, instead, been replaced by discussions of unequal access to the housing stock. Whilst it cannot be disputed that the majority of households in the Welsh countryside are living in 'adequate' housing (however defined), in several districts, inadequate housing conditions are affecting a significant minority of households.

In 1986, a Welsh Housing Condition Survey was undertaken by the Welsh Office to determine the incidence of 'unfit' dwellings. For the purposes of the survey, 'unfitness' was defined using Section 604 of the 1985 Housing Act, and included dwellings:

"in one or more of the following that it was not reasonably suitable for occupation in that condition; repair, stability, freedom from damp, internal arrangement, natural lighting, ventilation, water supply, drainage and sanitary conveniences, facilities for the preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water" (P105, Welsh Housing Statistics, 1992)

Using such a definition, the survey calculated that 7.6% of all dwellings in rural Wales could be classified as 'unfit'. Such a level of unfitness appeared slightly higher than that recorded for Wales as a whole (7.2%), with individual districts within rural Wales recording higher rates than witnessed in the Valleys - an area of perceived poor housing conditions (see Table 3.8). Indeed, Dwyfor reported the highest level of unfit dwellings in the whole of Wales (16.9%), with three other rural districts having rates of unfitness in

excess of 10% of all dwellings (Ceredigion, 15.9%; Dinefwr (13.9%); and Preseli, 11.9%). Thus, in these four rural districts at least poor housing conditions still appear to represent a significant issue. The majority of unfit dwellings in rural Wales did not lack any basic amenities. This said, in the districts of Dwyfor and Dinefwr, over 5% of households living in sub-standard accommodation also lacked one or more basic amenity. Across the whole of rural Wales, almost 3% of households were living in such housing, a marginally higher rate than that recorded in Wales as a whole (2.6%).

Table 3.8: Percentage of unfit dwellings in rural Wales, 1986

	lacking one or more basic amenity	not lacking amenities	total
Colwyn	0.5	1.1	1.5
Glyndwr	2.8	2.2	4.9
Carmarthen	2.3	4.2	6.5
Ceredigion	3.7	12.2	15.9
Dinefwr	5.4	8.5	13.9
Preseli	2.0	9.9	11.9
South Pembrokeshire	2.3	4.3	6.6
Aberconwy	1.0	0.4	1.4
Arfon	2.5	4.5	7.0
Dwyfor	5.6	11.3	16.9
Meirionnydd	1.3	1.3	2.6
Ynys Mon	3.2	0.9	4.0
Brecknock	3.3	3.3	6.6
Montgomeryshire	4.2	4.6	8.7
Radnorshire	3.8	1.7	5.5
Rural Wales	2.9	4.7	7.6
Wales	2.6	4.7	7.2

Source: Welsh House Condition Survey (1986)

A further indication of the poor state of the rural housing stock can be gleaned from the costs involved in repairing sub-standard properties. In 1986, around 7% of unfit dwellings in rural Wales required repairs in excess of £5 000, compared to only 5% of such dwellings in Wales as a whole. Again, the district of Dwyfor contained the highest proportion of dwellings needing over £5 000 of repairs in Wales - a rate of 18.1%. A further five rural districts - Montgomeryshire, Preseli, Dinefwr, Arfon and Radnorshire -

had at least 8% of households living in sub-standard properties requiring £5 000 or more in repairs (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9: Percentage of unfit dwellings needing more than £5 000 of repairs, 1986

Dwyfor	18.1	South Pembrokeshire	5.6
Montgomeryshire	11.5	Carmarthen	5.3
Preseli	9.3	Glyndwr	4.9
Dinefwr	9.1	Aberconwy	4.7
Arfon	8.0	Ynys Mon	4.2
Radnorshire	8.0	Meirionnydd	3.9
Brecknock	7.8	Colwyn	1.9
Ceredigion	6.1	Rural Wales	7.2
		Wales	5.1

Source: Welsh House Condition Survey (1986)

Further details on the availability of basic amenities in households are provided by the Census of Population and presented in Table 3.10. In 1991, 1.2% of all households resident in rural Wales had no access to a bath or shower, and 1.4% lacked an inside toilet. However, these figures represent a significant improvement on the situation recorded in 1981, with the number of households lacking such basic amenities falling by over two-thirds across the 1980s. Geographical variations in non-access to basic facilities in 1991 are highlighted in Table 3.04, which shows that the districts of Dwyfor, Carmarthen, Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Ceredigion had the highest rates of households lacking either an inside WC or bath/shower (over 1.5% in each district). Lowest proportions of such households were recorded in the northern districts of Colwyn, Aberconwy and Glyndwr (where less than 1% of all households lacked such amenities).

Table 3.10: Percentage of households lacking amenities in rural Wales, 1991 and percentage change 1981-91

<u>1991</u>				<u>1981-91</u>			
<u>lack bath</u>		<u>lack inside WC</u>		<u>lack bath</u>		<u>lack inside WC</u>	
Dwyfor	2.3	Dinefwr	2.3	South Pemb's	-77.7	Glyndwr	-75.7
Carmarthen	1.6	Dwyfor	2.0	Aberconwy	-72.7	South Pemb's	-73.5
Ceredigion	1.6	Carmarthen	1.9	Glyndwr	-72.2	Colwyn	-72.8
Montgomery	1.6	Montgomery	1.7	Montgomery	-70.3	Arfon	-72.2
Radnorshire	1.6	Radnorshire	1.7	Arfon	-70.3	Montgomery	-70.7
Arfon	1.5	Ceredigion	1.6	Ceredigion	-70.0	Ceredigion	-70.0
Meirionnydd	1.5	Arfon	1.4	Brecknock	-69.1	Aberconwy	-69.3
Dinefwr	1.4	Meirionnydd	1.4	Dwyfor	-68.5	Brecknock	-69.3
Ynys Mon	1.2	Brecknock	1.4	Carmarthen	-67.8	Carmarthen	-67.8
Brecknock	1.0	Ynys Mon	1.1	Preseli	-67.1	Dwyfor	-67.6
Preseli	0.9	Preseli	1.0	Colwyn	-66.4	Ynys Mon	-67.4
Glyndwr	0.8	South Pemb's	1.0	Meirionnydd	-65.4	Preseli	-67.4
South Pemb's	0.7	Glyndwr	0.8	Ynys Mon	-64.7	Dinefwr	-65.5
Aberconwy	0.5	Aberconwy	0.7	Dinefwr	-64.5	Meirionnydd	-64.5
Colwyn	0.3	Colwyn	0.3	Radnorshire	-63.6	Radnorshire	-62.8
Rural Wales	1.2	Rural Wales	1.7	Rural Wales	-68.7	Rural Wales	-69.1

Source: 1991 Census

3.24 The changing cost of housing

This section examines the changing costs associated with housing in rural Wales through the 1980s - costs relating to both domestic property prices and public and private rent levels.

Local authority housing - whilst an analysis of rent levels within rural Wales is not possible (Welsh Office figures are not available by district), several general points can be made from the Welsh figures, which can be taken as indicative of changing rent levels in the Welsh countryside. In 1991, the average rent for a local authority dwelling in Wales was £26.44 per week, slightly lower than the £27.09 average rent for England and Wales as a whole (see Table 3.11). Such a rent level represented a 131% increase on the figure recorded in 1981, an actual rent rise of £15 per week, and comparable to the 138%

increase reported for England and Wales. Rent rises of around 120-130% were recorded across all property types and sizes - from one-bedroom flats to four bedroom houses. However, rental increases between 1981-91 were greatest amongst one-bedroom houses (152%) and least for three-bedroom bungalows (119%).

Table 3.11: Rents of local authority dwellings in Wales, 1981-91

<u>property type</u>	<u>£ per week</u>		<u>%age change</u> <u>1981-91</u>
	<u>1981</u>	<u>1991</u>	
1 bed: house	9.66	24.37	152.3
flat	10.29	13.09	133.6
bungalow	9.77	22.65	131.8
2 bed: house	11.20	25.73	129.7
flat	11.18	26.62	138.1
bungalow	11.25	26.01	131.2
3 bed: house	11.74	27.40	133.4
flat	11.93	26.78	124.5
bungalow	12.47	27.25	118.5
4+ bed:	12.46	29.45	136.4
other dwellings	10.72	24.35	127.1
Wales	11.43	26.44	131.3
England and Wales	11.39	27.09	137.8

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1982, 1992)

Housing association dwellings - the average housing association rental in Wales stood at £31.94 per week in 1991, approximately 20% higher than the mean local authority weekly rental (Table 3.12). Whilst any consideration of differentials between the two rental tenures must take account of variations in housing stock, it does appear that the cost of gaining access to housing association accommodation is much higher than for council housing. For example, the highest local authority rental in 1991 - for a property containing four or more bedrooms - £29.45 per week - was still lower than the average rental for a housing association property. Finally, the mean association rental in Wales for 1991 was marginally lower than that recorded for England and Wales as a whole (£13.94 compared to £32.69).

Details of housing association rent levels in Wales are also available at a county level from 1985 to present. In the four counties of rural Wales, average weekly rentals ranged from £23.50 in Gwynedd (this figure should be treated with caution, however, since it is derived from an extremely small sample and represents a lower rent than recorded the previous year) to £33.90 in Dyfed. In three of these rural counties - Clwyd, Dyfed and Powys - association rent levels were higher than the mean local authority rental in Wales. Furthermore, whilst rent levels increased in each Welsh county in the 1985-91 period, rent rises were greatest in Dyfed (75%) and Powys (71%). Indeed, these rental increases were greater than those recorded for England and Wales as a whole (67%).

Table 3.12: Housing association rent registrations in rural Wales, 1985-91 - based on cases dealt with by Rent Officers

<u>mean registered rent (£ per week)</u>			<u>%age change</u>
<u>county</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1985-91</u>
Clwyd	19.10	28.08	47.0
Dyfed	19.40	33.94	74.9
Gwynedd	16.13	23.52*	45.8
Powys	17.62	30.10	70.9
Wales	18.96	31.94	68.5
England and Wales	19.60	32.69	66.8

* small sample

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1986, 1992)

Private sector rentals - the mean registered rent for unfurnished private accommodation in Wales at April 1991 was £26.67 per week - roughly 1% higher than the mean local authority rent level and around 17% lower than the average housing association rental (see Table 3.13). Again, the problems relating to cross-tenure comparisons need to be stressed, particularly given the high incidence of flats and bedsits associated with the private rental sector. Within rural Wales, private rental levels ranged from £25.56 per week in Clwyd to £28.29 per week in Dyfed, in comparison to the Welsh mean rental of £26.67 per week. Private rental increases of over 80% were recorded in each county

between 1984-91 period, with Dyfed (103%) and Powys (101%) showing increases at a higher rate than recorded in England and Wales as a whole (92%).

Table 3.13: Private sector rent registrations in rural Wales, 1984-91 - based on cases dealt with by rent officers

<u>county</u>	<u>mean registered rent (£ per week)</u>		<u>%age change</u>
	<u>1984</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1984-91</u>
Clwyd	13.92	25.56	83.6
Dyfed	13.96	28.29	102.6
Gwynedd	13.13	26.40	101.0
Powys	14.25	26.69	87.3
Wales	13.04	26.67	104.6
England and Wales	16.52	31.65	91.6

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1985, 1992)

Domestic property prices - alongside such recent rises in rent levels, rural Wales has also witnessed dramatic increases in private house prices. Between 1981 and 1989 (the last full year for which prices were obtained), the average house price in the region rose by 139%, only marginally lower than the corresponding increase for Great Britain (148%). However, whereas the price of an average property in Great Britain rose steadily through the 1980s (with the possible exception of 1986-87 when a 20% increase was recorded), house prices in rural Wales increased slowly until about 1985-86, and then spiralled upwards between 1986-89. As can be seen from Table 3.14, house prices in Great Britain increased by roughly the same rate (62%) in the two periods 1981-85 and 1985-89, whilst in rural Wales the corresponding prices rises were 35% and 77% respectively.

Table 3.14: Domestic property price percentage changes in rural Wales, 1981-85 and 1985-89

	1981-89	1981-85	1985-89
Rural Wales	138.7	34.7	77.1
Wales	154.6	48.7	71.3
Great Britain	147.8	62.0	61.6

Source: Nationwide Anglia Building Society (personal correspondence)

The Nationwide Anglia figures also allow a district breakdown of house price changes throughout the 1980s, although some estimates are based on small samples (see Table 3.15). Within the region, highest rates of increase were recorded in the eastern districts of Brecknock (210%) and Montgomeryshire (171%), and in South Pembrokeshire (169%), whilst three districts within Gwynedd - Arfon , Aberconwy and Meirionnydd - witnessed lowest levels of house price rises between 1981-89 (less than 100%).

Table 3.15: Domestic property prices in districts of rural Wales, 1989 and percentage change 1981-89

	<u>1989 mean prices *</u>	<u>%age price change 1981-89</u>
Brecknock	£69 875	210.0
South Pembrokeshire	£54 688	169.0
Preseli	£53 202	144.8
Ceredigion	£51 403	134.5
Montgomeryshire	£50 887	170.9
Glyndwr	£48 857	151.2
Dwyfor	£48 857	153.7
Aberconwy	£46 279	98.9
Colwyn	£44 900	122.0
Ynys Mon	£43 543	122.0
Carmarthen	£41 313	118.5
Dinefwr	£37 786	157.1
Arfon	£35 848	52.5
Meirionnydd	£31 278	63.9
mean price	£47 841	138.7

* no data for Radnorshire

Source: Nationwide Anglia Building Society (personal correspondence)

Such levels of increase are, in many ways, reflected in the mean house prices for districts in 1989, with Brecknock (£69 875) and South Pembrokeshire (£54 688) representing the districts with the highest prices, and the districts of Meirionnydd (£31 278) and Arfon (£35 848) showing the lowest average property prices. Such figures clearly indicate the

degree of house price variation evident in the region, with the average price in Brecknock more than double that recorded in Meirionnydd.

Analysis of 1989 mean prices by age and type of property, across the whole of rural Wales also reveals, not surprisingly, that detached houses were the most expensive property type, followed by detached bungalows, semi-detached and terraced houses. It is also apparent that, with the exception of terraced houses, 'new' and 'modern' properties tended to be more expensive than 'older' properties.

Table 3.16 combines the price characteristics associated with different types of property with the distribution of such properties in the rural region for 1986. It is clear from this table that, relative to Wales as a whole, the rural region contains higher proportions of detached houses and bungalows, whilst comparatively fewer terraced houses and flats. Furthermore, it appears that rural Wales has relatively higher proportions of larger properties (over six rooms) and fewer properties with one or two rooms. Thus, it can be argued that in many areas of the Welsh countryside there exists relatively fewer smaller properties at the lower end of the price range, making it more difficult for young people to enter into owner-occupation.

Table 3.16: Characteristics of the housing stock in rural Wales

frequency of property types (%ages)			frequency of property sizes - rooms (%ages)			house prices by property type	
	rural Wales	Wales		rural Wales	Wales		
detached house	28.3	15.2	1	0.6	0.8	detached	£79 130
semi-detached	20.6	27.3	2	4.1	4.7	semi-detached	£44 450
terraced	21.8	32.3	3-4	46.0	46.4	terraced	£36 627
bungalow	19.5	14.1	5-6	40.5	42.5	detached bungalow	£58 321
flat / bedsit	7.0	8.8	7+	9.0	5.8		
other	2.9	2.3					

Source: Welsh Inter-Censal Survey (1986) & Nationwide Anglia Building Society (personal correspondence)

3.25 Second and holiday homes

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the issue of leisure home ownership in the Welsh countryside was prominent in both the Welsh and British (predominantly English) media. It has been suggested that increases in such second and holiday home ownership are potentially damaging to the future of many rural communities and to the survival of the Welsh language. That such an issue dominates the discussion of rural housing problems today is doubtful, although it should be stressed that very little research examining the impact of leisure home ownership in rural Wales has been undertaken in recent years (see Bielckus et al 1972; Coppock 1977; Jacobs 1972).

Evidence from the 1991 Census indicates that the level of leisure home ownership is relatively low in most rural districts (see Table 3.17). Indeed, in nine districts, second and holiday homes accounted for less than 5% of the total housing stock. In Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, however, 17% and 14% of properties respectively were being used as leisure homes. Thus, it can be suggested that in some areas of rural Wales, particularly in communities within these two districts, leisure home ownership may still be play an important part within local housing markets, although the issue would appear to have become less political in recent years.

Table 3.17: Second residences and holiday homes as a percentage of all dwellings in rural Wales, 1991

	second homes	holiday homes	both
Dwyfor	12.7	3.9	16.6
Meirionnydd	10.4	3.9	14.3
South Pembrokeshire	1.9	5.2	7.1
Preseli	2.2	3.2	5.4
Ynys Mon	3.6	1.6	5.2
Ceredigion	3.4	1.8	5.2
Aberconwy	2.0	2.4	4.4
Arfon	2.0	1.3	3.3
Brecknock	1.7	1.5	3.2
Montgomeryshire	2.2	0.9	3.1
Radnorshire	1.7	1.2	2.9
Colwyn	1.2	1.3	2.5
Glyndwr	1.8	0.6	2.4
Dinefwr	1.1	0.5	1.6
Carmarthen	0.8	0.7	1.5
rural Wales mean	3.2	2.0	5.2

Source: 1991 Census

In a majority of rural districts, second homes appeared more important (in numerical terms) than holiday properties. For example, in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd - where levels of leisure home ownership were greatest - second homes outnumbered holiday properties by a ratio of more than two-to-one. In terms of change across the 1980s, however, the situation is more complex. Table 3.18 shows that between 1981-91, a reduction in the number of second homes was recorded in each district of rural Wales. Such losses ranged from 8% in Dwyfor to 42% in Colwyn, with the average fall across the whole of rural Wales being 22%. Trends in holiday home provision, however, are less clear cut. Whilst, in overall terms, the region witnessed a 2.8% loss of such housing across the 1980s, in the district of Brecknock, holiday home provision increased by almost 93%, whilst in Arfon, Colwyn and Preseli growth rates of between 20-30% were recorded.

Table 3.18: Percentage change in second and holiday home ownership in rural Wales 1981-91

	second homes	holiday homes
Colwyn	-42.0	+30.6
Glyndwr	-39.6	-41.1
Carmarthen	-36.2	-36.6
Ceredigion	-26.0	-1.8
Dinefwr	-4.4	+3.8
Preseli	-24.2	+22.2
South Pembrokeshire	-28.5	-7.6
Aberconwy	-38.0	-44.9
Arfon	-37.2	+25.7
Dwyfor	-8.1	-2.7
Meirionnydd	-10.0	-31.5
Ynys Mon	-14.6	-25.8
Brecknock	-12.1	+92.9
Montgomeryshire	-26.1	-8.4
Radnorshire	-25.3	-16.6
rural Wales mean	-22.4	-2.8

Source: 1991 Census

3.26 Planning applications

In recent years, the number of planning applications received by many planning departments within rural Wales has increased dramatically. Table 3.19, based on a 1990 survey of district councils, clearly shows that, in six rural districts at least (the remaining seven districts could not provide an annual breakdown of applications), applications rose by between 31% (Dwyfor) and 147% (Dinefwr) in the 1985-89 period. Whilst such applications undoubtedly include some commercial, extension and conversion developments, the vast majority appear to involve construction of new properties (see Chapter Six). Increases of this magnitude, it can be suggested, have resulted in considerable delays in the assessment of planning applications. For example, in April 1989, Ceredigion District Council wrote to the Secretary of State for Wales to complain that:

"the number of planning applications the authority has to deal with may lead to a 'breakdown' of the whole system" (Cambrian News, 14.4.89)

Table 3.19: Planning applications received by six authorities within rural Wales, 1985-89

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1985-89	
						no.	%age
Aberconwy	452	508	585	692	768	+316	69.9%
Arfon	604	697	659	793	932	+328	54.3%
Dinefwr	482	510	747	1063	1192	+710	147.3%
Dwyfor	527	548	674	569	688	+161	30.6%
Preseli	1140	1101	1350	1653	1796	+656	57.5%
Ynys Mon	872	896	999	1251	1567	+695	79.9%

Source: author's survey

3.3 The incidence and nature of housing need

This section brings together processes of socio-economic change discussed in the previous chapter, and the changing structure of housing provision (presented in section 3.2). As pressure on the rural housing market has intensified, the price of housing has increased and the number of social rental dwellings have declined, so, it can be suggested, the incidence of housing need will have escalated over recent years. This section investigates the level and nature of housing need in rural Wales by considering two key indicators - homelessness and social housing waiting lists. Although it is recognised that neither indicator provides a 'true' measurement of the scale of housing need in the Welsh countryside, it is felt that they provide a useful insight into the incidence and nature of 'expressed' need for rural housing.

3.31 Homelessness

Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that persons accepted as homeless under the provisions of the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act and Part III of the 1985 Housing Act are provided with alternative accommodation. In 1991, almost 1,200 households were accepted as homeless by local authorities in rural Wales. Such a figure represented a homelessness rate of 4.5 per 1,000 households - half that recorded for Wales as a whole (Table 3.20). Thus, it would appear that homelessness in Wales is very much an urban problem. However, whilst the incidence of homelessness in 1991 appeared low in the rural region, the increase in homelessness over recent years has been at a much higher rate in the Welsh countryside. Between 1986-91, accepted cases of homelessness in rural Wales increased by about 106%, compared to a rise of roughly 65% for the whole of Wales. In fact, eleven rural districts recorded rises in homeless households at higher levels than the Welsh average. In Dinefwr, for example, accepted cases of homelessness rose by 400% in the 1986-91 period, and in the districts of Ceredigion and Montgomeryshire increases of more than 200% were recorded. Only two districts - Dinefwr and Aberconwy - witnessed decreases in homelessness levels in the 1986-91 period.

In 1991, rural homelessness, expressed as a rate per 1,000 households, was greatest in Dinefwr (12.1%) - the only rural district to record a homelessness rate above the Welsh average. Only four other districts witnessed rates of over 6 per 1,000 households - Brecknock, Ceredigion, Meirionnydd and Montgomeryshire. By contrast, lowest rates of homelessness were recorded in the districts of Ynys Mon (1.6), Arfon (1.6) and Aberconwy (1.7).

The homelessness figures presented so far have consisted of households accepted as homeless by local authorities, that is, those who have satisfied a set of strict criteria. To these figures could be added those households who had either made enquiries or

presented their cases to local authorities regarding homelessness. Including unsuccessful cases presented to local authorities would increase the number of potential and actual homeless from 1 195 to 1 463 households, and adding households who had made enquiries in writing to local authorities regarding homelessness would produce a revised estimate of 1 766 households - an increase of almost 50% on the official 'accepted' figure. Whilst it could be argued that many of the households not accepted as homeless may be in less serious housing need, it is reasonable to suggest that their housing situation must be fairly serious for them to have contacted the local authority in writing.

Table 3.20: Accepted cases of homelessness in rural Wales, 1991 and 1986-91

Rate per 1000 households 1991		Percentage change 1986-91	
Dinefwr	12.1	Dinefwr	434.4
Meirionnydd	7.7	Ceredigion	257.1
Ceredigion	6.2	Montgomeryshire	255.9
Brecknock	6.1	Ynys Mon	180.0
Montgomeryshire	6.1	Preseli	155.0
South Pembrokeshire	5.6	Arfon	118.8
Dwyfor	4.2	Radnorshire	111.1
Carmarthen	4.1	Glyndwr	78.9
Preseli	3.7	Colwyn	78.6
Colwyn	2.3	Brecknock	75.4
Glyndwr	2.1	Meirionnydd	72.4
Radnor	2.1	Carmarthen	50.0
Aberconwy	1.7	South Pembrokeshire	28.4
Arfon	1.6	Dwyfor	-16.7
Ynys Mon	1.6	Aberconwy	-24.5
Rural Wales	4.5	Rural Wales	105.7
Wales	9.0	Wales	64.5

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1987, 1992)

Roughly half of all homelessness cases accepted by local authorities within rural Wales had resulted from two scenarios: action by a private landlord - involving an immediate or actual notice of eviction - which accounted for 27% of all cases; and a dispute with parents, relatives or friends - which made up approximately 24% of accepted cases. Two further important reasons for persons becoming homeless were 'disputes with a spouse or cohabitee' (17%) and mortgage repossession (14%).

Table 3.21: The causes of homelessness in rural Wales, 1991 (percentages)

	<u>Rural</u> <u>Wales</u>	<u>Wales</u>
action by landlord	27.2	20.6
action by local authority	2.5	2.8
action by mortgagee	13.7	16.0
dispute with spouse / cohabitee	16.8	16.2
dispute with parents / relatives / friends	23.7	33.0
fire, flood, storm, etc.	3.4	1.8
sale of owner-occupied property	2.6	9.1
other	9.1	7.8
total	1 331	9 813

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1992)

The characteristics of households accepted as homeless are presented in Table 3.22, which is based on the seven priority classes included in the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act and Part III of the 1985 Housing Act, and also the number of non-priority cases. Around four-fifths of accepted cases were treated as priority, with by far the largest group consisting of households with dependant children (54% of all accepted cases). The number of such households was more than ten times higher than for the next category - households containing a pregnant person (5.3%), with the remaining five priority household types together making up about 16% of all cases. The composition of priority class groupings differed only slightly from that reported for Wales as a whole - the main difference being that rural Wales had fewer households with dependent children or a pregnant woman.

Table 3.22: Cases accepted by priority class in rural Wales, 1991 (percentages)

	<u>Rural</u> <u>Wales</u>	<u>Wales</u>
<u>priority class - vulnerable household member</u>		
household with dependent children	53.9	58.1
household member pregnant	5.3	8.2
old age	3.9	3.3
physical disability	3.2	2.6
mental disability	1.4	1.5
other special reasons	3.7	2.1
household homeless in emergency	3.4	1.8
<u>not treated as priority case</u>	20.6	22.2
total	1 331	9 813

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1992)

The actions taken by local authorities to alleviate individual cases of homelessness in 1991 are presented in Table 3.23. Three out of ten homeless households were merely given 'advice and assistance', whilst 16% were placed in 'bed and breakfast' accommodation. A further 12% of such households were enabled to stay in or return to their previous accommodation, whilst 10% were relocated in a local authority dwelling.

Table 3.23: Action taken by local authorities in rural Wales, 1991 (percentages)

	<u>Rural Wales</u>	<u>Wales</u>
enabled to stay in or return to previous accommodation	11.6	15.8
placed in ordinary local authority dwelling	10.1	11.3
placed in local authority hostel	7.8	9.2
placed in B&B accommodation	15.9	14.4
placed with friends or relatives	4.2	3.3
otherwise placed	7.1	4.6
referred to another local authority, voluntary organisation or women's refuge	3.0	4.4
given advice or assistance	30.0	36.9
total	1 331	9 813

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics (1992)

3.32 Waiting lists

There exist two main sources of information concerning the size of social housing waiting lists in rural Wales - the 1986 Welsh Inter-Censal Survey and the Demand for Social Housing in Rural Wales Tai Cymru report. Whilst direct comparison between the two estimates is problematic, since each is based on a different sampling procedure, it is, nevertheless, possible to suggest that the number of households on such waiting lists has increased in the latter half of 1980s. In 1986, the Inter-Censal Survey reported an estimated 12 592 households on local authority waiting and transfer lists. By 1989-90, a survey of housing authorities and housing associations within rural Wales revealed that an estimated 16 789 households were currently on such lists - an increase of around one-

third on the 1986 estimate. Whilst some of this increase can be explained by the fact that the latter survey included housing associations as well as local authorities in its estimate, the same survey also revealed that 82% of housing managers had reported an increase in the number of applicants between 1985-90. Indeed, 53% of managers reported increases in excess of 50% across this five year period (Tai Cymru, 1990b, p97, table 6.02).

A district breakdown of the estimated waiting and transfer lists for 1986 is provided in Table 3.24. The table clearly shows that there were relatively fewer households on the lists, expressed as a percentage of total households, in the rural region (4.7%) compared to Wales as a whole (6.0%). In fact, only three districts within rural Wales reported waiting list estimates at higher levels than the Welsh mean - South Pembrokeshire (6.3%), Preseli (6.7%) and Ynys Mon (6.9%). Lowest proportions of households on waiting and transfer lists were recorded in the districts of Aberconwy (3.0%) and Dwyfor (3.0%).

Table 3.24: Applicants on local authority housing lists in rural Wales, 1986 (percentages)

Ynys Mon	6.9	Dinefwr	4.0
Preseli	6.7	Meirionnydd	3.7
South Pembrokeshire	6.3	Colwyn	3.7
Arfon	5.7	Aberconwy	3.0
Brecknock	5.3	Dwyfor	2.2
Radnorshire	4.8		
Montgomeryshire	4.7	Rural Wales mean	4.7
Glyndwr	4.7	Wales mean	6.0
Ceredigion	4.5		

Source: Welsh Inter-Censal Survey (1986)

Whilst district level estimates of waiting list totals are unavailable from the Tai Cymru survey due to variations in sampling procedures, the report nevertheless provides a wealth of information on the social make-up of these lists for 1990, some of which is presented below:

Current tenure - almost 40% of all applicants across rural Wales were living in private rented accommodation. A further 23% of applicants were sharing accommodation with

relatives and roughly one-fifth were owner-occupiers. Tenants currently residing in social housing accounted for another 10% of applicants.

Age profiles - around half of total applicants were aged either under 25 years or over 65 years, and a further one-fifth were aged between 25-35 years.

Household type - 'non-elderly' families comprised about one-third of applicants, whilst elderly groups (single and couples) made up a further 27% of households on the list. 'Non-elderly' childless couples (18%) and single persons (16%) made up the remaining applicants on the list.

Length of time on list - the vast majority of applicants (74%) had been on the waiting list for less than two years, with only 11% on the list for a period exceeding four years. However, interpretation of such a finding is problematic, since it is not clear whether the majority of applicants are normally rehoused within two years, or the numbers applying for social housing have increased dramatically in the last two years.

3.4 The issue of housing affordability in the Welsh countryside

As the incidence of housing need has intensified, so too has the debate on the affordability of housing within the Welsh countryside. Various commentators - academic, policy and media-based - have highlighted key aspects of socio-economic restructuring within rural Wales, and the changing structure of housing provision and allocation which have resulted in a significant proportion of the rural population being unable to 'afford' the cost of housing within the countryside. In short, it has been argued that such groups have, at best, had to rely on 'unsuitable' forms of housing, or, at worst, been forced to leave their community of residence. This chapter considers the issue of housing 'affordability' within the Welsh countryside, examining three key aspects of this issue:

- (i) the perceived causes and consequences of a lack of affordable housing;
- (ii) the policy responses to the rural affordability problem;
- (iii) the implementation of proposed housing solutions.

3.41 The perception of housing problems

Media interest and policy publications concerning rural housing problems in Wales first appeared in the 1989-90 period. The perceived components of the rural housing issue were similar to those reported in the English countryside: growing external demand on the housing stock for use as second homes, retirement homes and commuter homes; local people being priced out of the market; lack of sufficient housing to rent and a mismatch between the rented stock and local needs; rural communities in decline; and a lack of Government realisation of the size of the problem (Community Action for Social and Economic Development, 1989). However, in a Welsh context there existed strong

linguistic and cultural implications of community decline, since the increasing demand was seen as resulting mainly from English in-migration. Indeed, housing problems were viewed as very much linked to the general social and cultural welfare of rural communities:

"people who cannot gain access to housing will move away in search of it and the 'forced' displacement of local people in this way inevitably has adverse social and cultural consequences for communities. The importance of kinship and social networks in enabling people to go on living in their own familiar environment must not be dismissed" (C.A.S.E.D., 2.3, p10)

Also in 1989, a seminar on housing problems in mid-Wales was organised by Mid Wales Development (now the Development Board for Rural Wales) and attended by over 100 delegates who represented a wide range of interested organisations. In his introduction to the seminar, Dr. Iain Skewis, the Chief Executive of MWD stressed the importance of housing for the social and economic development of the region:

"Mid Wales Development has a responsibility for the economic and social development of its area - the bridge between these two aspects is housing. Poor housing or worse still no housing is the severest form of social deprivation, while economic development is inhibited where housing is unavailable...Encouraging young people to live in Mid Wales is fundamental to our work and this cannot be achieved without a supply of the right type of housing at present" (p1)

Skewis synthesised the main housing problems affecting rural Wales:

- (i) the supply of social housing was declining rapidly - local authorities were unable to construct dwellings, council houses were being sold under the Right-to-Buy legislation, and new housing association provision was, at best, limited;
- (ii) within the private sector, new construction was being targeted to incoming groups - particularly from South East England - who were able to afford higher prices. The presence of such in-movement was also causing the prices of existing dwellings to rise substantially.

Evidence of housing problems in areas of the Welsh countryside was also being presented in the local media. The following quotations, taken from a mid-Wales weekly newspaper, provide an indication of some of the issues being raised:

"Councillor GT Cowcher, chairman of Llandyssul Community Council said - 'people have been coming up to me in Llandyssul wanting to know where they can live, there are young people, looking for housing, many of whom have been on the waiting list for a long time'"
(Cambrian News, 9.12.88)

"Councillor H. Evans, Aberystwyth...said people from the South East of England don't believe their luck when they find they can sell up and move to places like Ceredigion where there is a better environment. 'But our young people can't compete. It is time that Ceredigion District Council responds to this problem...If our young people are forced away - either because of the high cost of housing, the lack of employment or a combination of both - we shall soon be seeing the last of this group of people in their native land'"
(Cambrian News, 21.4.89)

"the [council waiting] list is growing every week and the majority of our allocations are now to homeless people and those on top medical priority...young married couples with young children have virtually no chance of being allocated a decent home"
(local councillor quoted in Cambrian News, 5.1.90)

The gravity of housing problems within the Welsh countryside was mentioned by the incoming chairperson of Mid Wales Development, Glyn Davies in March 1989, who recognised that 'policies of economic growth' together with a 'fresh housing campaign' were required to keep young people within the Welsh countryside:

"the key to retaining them is to offer them the standard and diversity of employment opportunity with higher wage levels and an improved quality of life. They won't just stay because we ask them to. But it is absolutely vital that we are also able to provide young people with affordable accommodation"

Thus, it can be seen that housing problems within rural Wales, like those present in the English countryside, were perceived to revolve around external competition and a lack of affordable housing for local residents. Such housing problems were seen as threatening the future of many rural communities and diluting the Welshness of many areas of the Welsh countryside. The housing issue began to be used as an icon - highlighting how a combination of socio-economic changes and a housing market increasingly dominated by the private sector was damaging the Welsh language and culture of many areas within the region. Housing became one banner under which Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (the Welsh Language Society) rallied in their 'Wales is Not For Sale' campaign. The central tenet of the Cymdeithas campaign was that local housing should meet the needs of local people only and that adequate control mechanisms should be implemented to ensure such a goal. The Society's campaign of direct action, although arguably mis-directed against local estate agents selling to in-moving English purchasers, nevertheless has done much to raise the issue of rural housing up the Welsh political agenda.

On the whole, heightened concern with housing problems within the Welsh countryside has been based on only piecemeal evidence, since no major survey of housing 'needs' has ever been undertaken within the region. As the C.A.S.E.D. report, cited earlier, noted:

"'grass roots' pressure is called for - with community councils working in partnership with local authorities, housing associations and voluntary agencies - surveying the needs and problems of their area. The Countryside Commission's Local Jigsaw initiative in Wales is seen as a useful means by which to direct efforts to investigate the housing circumstances of rural communities" (pp.11-12)

This need for a comprehensive survey of housing need in rural Wales was a view shared by Tai Cymru (Housing for Wales), the body created to oversee housing associations in Wales. In 1989, Tai Cymru, recognising "the need for quality information regarding the housing problems of rural Wales", commissioned two pieces of research in an attempt to

aid the organisation's future investment strategy in rural Wales: the first project concerned the demand for social housing in rural Wales^(1990b); whilst the second focused on the housing aspirations of young people in rural Wales^(1990a). A brief synopsis of each report is outlined below:

The demand for social housing in rural Wales - the central objective of the first project involved an evaluation of:

"'expressed' demand for social housing, as reflected in the waiting lists held by local authorities and housing associations" (par. 2, Executive Summary).

From an analysis of the waiting lists of 17 local authorities and 14 housing associations, and interviews with officers from both sets of organisations, the authors concluded that:

"...demand for social housing in rural areas is generally of a very high order, but varies significantly both within and between districts. Furthermore, demand from these groups in both 'general' and 'specialised' need would appear to be rising" (8.01)

The study revealed that waiting lists in rural Wales were generally much larger than those recorded by the Welsh Inter Censal Survey of 1986. Almost 21 000 applicants were estimated to be on local authority waiting lists, with a further 8 000 households registered on housing association lists. Interviews with housing officers confirmed that the demand for social housing had increased dramatically in the 1980s, and was expected to rise across all categories of applicants in the early 1990s. Such officers felt that increased demand had resulted from an in-movement of more affluent groups to rural Wales, a growth in one-parent families, and relatively low income levels associated with local employment.

Regarding the characteristics of applicants on waiting lists across rural Wales, the survey revealed that between 30-50% were non-elderly couples or families, with the elderly (single and couples) and non-elderly single persons each accounting for one-fifth of all

applicants. Over one-third of applicants were living in private-rented accommodation, with owner-occupiers and persons living with relatives each accounting for a further one-fifth of applicants on housing waiting lists. In terms of the geography of housing provision and expressed demand, the report noted that:

"for many applicants seeking social housing in rural Wales, the rehousing option is essentially an urban option. This emerges from the preferences recorded in waiting list applications and arises because of the distribution of the housing stock within essentially 'rural' districts which is predominantly in the main towns" (3.21)

The report recommended that further research assessing the demand for social housing using waiting lists would benefit from: common waiting lists; research on groups unable to gain access to waiting lists; and research assessing the success of rural housing initiatives.

Housing aspirations of young people in rural Wales - the second research project commissioned by Tai Cymru examined housing opinions amongst a sample of young people living in the region, and a sample who had moved away.

The majority of young people in the sample appeared satisfied with their current housing position, with only 17% expressing any degree of disquiet about their present situation. Most young people planning to move in the near future expressed a preference for owner-occupation (80%). Around 11% of youngsters expressed a preference for rented accommodation and a further 9% wished to move into shared ownership housing. This said, many recognised that realising such a desire for private ownership might prove difficult:

"although they would prefer to buy, only a small proportion of those who are not currently owners felt that they would be able to afford to buy" (par. 10.2)

Of those young people who had moved out of rural Wales, over half had done so for employment related reasons, whilst a further 35% had left to attend an institution of

further or higher education. Higher proportions of leavers tended to be graduates, in the higher socio-economic groups and earning higher incomes than stayers:

"the overall trend seems to be that young people leave rural areas for further or higher education. Often at the time they will intend to return at a later date, but once qualified the greater job opportunities elsewhere form a stark contrast to the type of employment they would be able to obtain if they returned to a rural area" (par. 8.2)

3.42 The agency response to rural housing problems

(Tai Cymru, 1991)

In March 1991, Tai Cymru organised a major conference to discuss many of the issues raised by the two rural housing reports mentioned above. The conference was attended by 125 delegates, who represented, at a senior level, almost all organisations involved in housing policy formulation and investment within rural Wales. The conference had two main stated objectives:

- [1] to 'home-in' on rural housing problems (on an all-Wales, regional and local level) and the difficulties faced by individuals and organisations in resolving these problems;
- [2] to establish the most appropriate mechanisms for dealing with rural housing issues, and how organisations involved in rural policy formulation and implementation can best work together to ensure rural housing problems can be tackled effectively.

The structure of the conference was arranged around five broad issues, and the remaining part of this section provides a synopsis of each of these themes:

[1] Lessons from recent research - recent housing research within rural Wales had indicated close inter-linkages between housing, employment, and social processes within the region. Such a finding, it was felt, necessitated closer liaison both within and between a wide range of organisations within rural Wales. It was suggested that a single initiating

body needed to be established, although no consensus emerged as to which organisation should perform such a role. Whilst the importance of recent research was recognised by many delegates, it was felt that:

"this research needed to be backed up by more localised, detailed research if effective targeting of resources is to be achieved" (*Tai Cymru*, 1991, A7)

Such research, it was suggested, could be modelled on the concept of the "Local Jigsaw" initiative, although such an approach needed to be co-ordinated to ensure 'quality and consistency of information' (A7). There appeared to be a particularly urgent need for localised information which identified the groups in need of housing, their property requirements and expressed locations. Such information was seen as a more accurate indicator of housing need than waiting lists:

"there should be movement away from waiting lists towards a system of compiling a common register of housing need, either by a local authority area or nationally. It was agreed that waiting lists did not necessarily reflect the real need or demand in an area, and that a system should be devised whereby individuals could register their needs or express their future requirements. This could be a similar system to that used by the Citizen's Advice Bureaux, which could be independent of both local authorities and housing associations, and which would be more accessible to the general public" (*ibid.*, A18)

However, it was recognised that even if demand for additional housing in a village had been established from a local survey, difficulties in obtaining suitable land or property may prevent housing being provided. The concept of providing one or two new properties in a large number of villages was also questioned on economic grounds, and it was proposed that larger schemes, catering for several villages, might provide a more realistic option.

Finally, many delegates, including some local authority representatives, were not fully aware of the 'role of housing associations, what their policies and practices are, and how they are funded' (^{*ibid.*} A21). Delegates felt that there existed a need for increased and

improved publicity on the workings of housing associations as the new provider of social housing.

[2] Contribution of community appraisals - community appraisals were generally viewed in positive terms, given that they appeared capable of supplying local-scale information on a range of rural issues - housing, employment, environment, amenity and tourism - and could be used either individually or collectively to provide valuable information for district, county or regional agencies. In terms of housing data, community appraisals were seen as providing:

"broader and more detailed information than waiting lists, covering private sector as well as social housing requirements. They can draw out 'hidden' need, and enable more exact provision in terms of scale and mix of housing to be planned. The information is useful not only for housing providers but also for Local Authority strategic housing policy formulation, for investment plans/strategies (housing) and statutory local plans (planning)"
(*ibid.*, 86)

Such appraisals were also seen as allowing local residents an opportunity to be involved in the development of their community. However, whilst delegates welcomed the idea of appraisals, the general feeling was that surveys to date had been sporadic, both in terms of survey structures and geographical coverage. Questionnaires needed to be professionally compiled and analysed in order to generate standardised information for the whole of rural Wales. Such a process would, however, require substantial funding, and the fear expressed was that funding would be given to those communities which 'shouted the loudest'.

[3] Bridging the affordability gap - the 'exceptions' policy within the planning structure was viewed as a useful means of lowering land values for the provision of affordable housing. Delegates considered, however, that such a policy could only be effective if incorporated within Local Plans, as a framework within which:

"exceptional consents and the use of Section 106 Agreements could be operated and defended. An unclear policy would be constantly challenged and land with exceptions planning consent, therefore, subject to 'hope value'" (ibid., c3)

Another suggested route by which land costs could be reduced was through legal covenants attached to the disposal of local authority land to housing associations, developers or individuals which would control future occupancy and ownership. This said, several local authority delegates stated that such land was in short supply, and so this avenue of land release could only represent a short term solution.

Housing construction methods could only play a minimal part in reducing building costs, although many delegates felt that standardised designs would be useful. The extra conditions placed on the use of local building materials within National Parks were thought to have increased housing construction costs.

Many delegates considered that further consideration needed to be given to rehabilitation schemes, given that they avoided problems relating to land availability, costs and planning agreements.

Finally, the definition of 'local' in many Section 106 Agreements was criticised as being too restrictive by several housing association delegates. Such a viewpoint was shared by a building society delegate, who commented that societies would:

"shy away from funding housing association schemes and private mortgages where occupancy or ownership was to be 'very locally restricted'" (ibid, c23)

[4] The contribution of enablers

District councils - Delegates identified the district council as the main enabler or co-ordinator of social housing provision, but many doubted whether it had fully realised this role in practice. The principal function of the local authority involved an identification of housing need, and assembling and providing land, although opportunities for the latter

were generally diminishing. Finally, many delegates considered that there existed a need for increased communication between local authorities and housing associations;

County councils - it was generally accepted that county councils could only make a limited contribution to potential solutions. However, the provision of social housing needed to be included within Structure Plans, and council-owned land could be released at below-market value rates for low-cost housing schemes;

Tai Cymru - although the main provider of subsidy for housing associations, many delegates felt that Tai Cymru needed to refine the identification of its priorities;

Housing associations - housing association delegates considered that their potential role in the housing system had not yet been fully understood by local authorities, whilst local authority delegates questioned associations' ability to 'deliver the volume of social housing required' ^{ibid.,} (D13);

Planners - planning delegates felt that too much expectation had been placed on the planning system as a vehicle to alleviate housing problems. This said, many recognised that new Structure Plans and Local Plans allowed for the inclusion of affordable, local needs housing policies;

Development agencies - delegates suggested that the Development Board for Rural Wales and the Welsh Development Agency could consider housing needs when purchasing land for economic development;

Private developers - delegates considered that the potential contribution of private developers in satisfying housing needs was relatively limited, given that private sector schemes were driven by profit rather than need, often involved cross-subsidy which meant additional 'executive-style' housing, and were difficult to keep 'affordable' in perpetuity;

Other bodies - it was felt by several delegates that other landowners, such as the Church in Wales and the Forestry Commission, might be able to provide subsidised land and, as such, should be contacted by Tai Cymru.

[5] Inter-organisational liaison - the establishment of a multi agency forum was discussed by delegates. However, many felt that such a forum would require a very clear focus otherwise there would be 'widespread discussion but no action' (^{ibid.,} E9). The general feeling of the conference was that the forum needed to encompass the whole of rural development, rather than be restricted to housing issues. In addition, it was felt that such liaison should not be limited to inter-agency communication, but needed to be linked at the local level and include an input from the communities themselves.

3.43 The implementation of local needs housing policies within the Welsh countryside

The final part of the chapter focuses on the implementation of local needs policies within rural Wales in recent years. It draws on information from a survey of district councils conducted by the author in 1990 and also material taken from a similar survey included in a recent Tai Cymru report (1990b). In short, the section considers two aspects of local-needs housing policy:

- (i) Welsh Office policy guidance relating to low-cost rural housing;
- (ii) the extent to which such guidance has been put into practice by district councils within the region;

The 'exceptions' policy in rural Wales

By the late 1980s, pressure on the Welsh Office to clarify planning legislation with regards to local needs housing was intensifying. Gwynedd County Council had attempted to extend its planning control powers in an attempt to help local people gain access to rural housing, arguing that the culture and language of the county would be damaged by an unchecked extraneous demand for housing.

In December 1988, the Welsh Office issued a circular (53/88) - The Welsh Language: Development Plans and Development Control - in which it was stated that "the needs and interests of the Welsh language may be a material consideration when preparing Local Plans and determining planning applications". Within six months, a draft planning policy guidance (PPG) - Land for Low Cost Housing in Rural Areas of Wales - was issued by the Welsh Office for comment. The PPG, noting the 'growing difficulty' of the availability of land to meet affordable housing needs within rural communities, proposed that, in appropriate cases, additional land could be released for low-cost housing for rural

residents. However, as in England, such additional releases would involve the imposition of occupancy conditions - Section 52 Agreements (now Section 106s), covenants or other legal arrangements:

"it is an essential condition of the release of additional land in these circumstances that the authority be satisfied that secure arrangements are in place which will ensure that the object of providing affordable dwellings for local people is met not only when the dwellings are first occupied but for the remainder of the lifetime of these dwellings" (par. 4)

However, unlike the guidance issued in England, the Welsh draft PPG failed provide a working definition of 'local' or 'affordable' provision:

"the guidance repeatedly uses the term 'low cost' but fails to address this aspect or give any pointers as to how this may be achieved" (Powys County Structure Plan (First Alteration, Feb. 1991), 6.7)

The implementation of local needs policies in rural Wales

In an attempt to assess the level of implementation of local needs policies, a survey of the fifteen districts within rural Wales was conducted in May 1990. The survey achieved a 100% response rate, although the quality of responses varied from district to district.

The survey revealed that six of the fifteen districts had implemented policies which discriminated in favour of 'locals' in certain circumstances, and a further three authorities were in the process of preparing such policies. The planning officers of two districts - Carmarthen and South Pembrokeshire - stated that, although local needs policies had not been implemented, they were nevertheless aware of housing problems within their areas. Only three authorities - Brecknock, Colwyn and Dwyfor - failed to register any concern for housing problems, whilst the officer from Meirionnydd District Council pointed out that the council had delegated its planning function to the Snowdonia National Park. Information provided in the Demand for Social Housing in Rural Wales (1990) report

showed that Snowdonia National Park had implemented a local needs policy, while the other two National Parks authorities were in the process of preparing such policies.

Whilst virtually all districts had identified sites suitable for low-cost housing schemes, only six had undertaken housing needs surveys. As the Director of Planning and Architecture for Radnorshire District Council commented:

"we have...no surveys or statistics available on the problem and have designed this [local needs] policy on a perceived need which has come to us via local member comments. We have no idea, therefore of the real extent of the problem or if indeed, there really is a problem. We have had, however, a number of applications made under the policy since its adoption earlier this year" (survey response, 20.7.90)

Evidence from the Tai Cymru (1990b) report suggested that all districts that had already implemented, or were about to implement, local needs policies had produced a definition of 'local' and intended to implement the scheme using Section 52 Agreements under the Town and Country Act 1971. Thirteen authorities within rural Wales had entered into partnerships with housing associations in their local needs schemes, whilst only four districts had involved private developers in such schemes. Thus, it appears from these surveys that there has been considerable activity initiated by local planning authorities:

"to research local housing need, to promote low cost housing projects themselves and to respond to the initiatives of others to provide social housing" (Tai Cymru, 1990a, 7.17)

The 'local needs' policies of six districts which provided information in the 1990 survey - Arfon, Ceredigion, Glyndwr, Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Ynys Mon - are presented in Appendix A.

3.5 Summary

In short, the first part of Chapter Three demonstrated that considerable restructuring had taken place within the rural housing market. It illustrated how the private sector dominated both existing and new housing provision - with owner-occupation accounting for 70% of all households, and private builds contributing 76% of all new housing constructions in 1991. The effects of recent government housing legislation have been a dilution of local authority powers to intervene within the housing market, and a net loss of more than 14,000 social rental dwellings (23%) during the 1980s. Housing associations, although contributing around one-fifth of new housing in 1991, had made only a minimal impact on the housing market, and accounted for less than 2% of total dwellings. Rates of new housebuilding were highest in the north-eastern parts of rural Wales.

Whilst the majority of rural households were living in accommodation of an adequate standard (according to official criteria), slightly less than 8% of households resident in rural Wales were living in sub-standard dwellings in 1986. Highest rates of unfitness in Wales were recorded in rural districts, with higher proportions of unfit rural dwellings requiring repairs in excess of £5 000.

Alongside tenorial shifts, the cost of housing within rural Wales has increased since the early 1980s. In short, local authority rents more than doubled during the 1980s; housing association rentals increased by almost 70% in the 1985-91 period; private sector rent levels doubled between 1984-91; and domestic property prices almost trebled in the post-1981 period. Furthermore, it was reported that the average housing association rental level in 1991 was 21% higher than the mean local authority rental across Wales.

The number of second and holiday homes fell between 1981-91, with leisure home ownership accounting for just 5% of the total stock across rural Wales. However, leisure home ownership levels in two districts totalled over 10% of all housing stock.

Bringing these demographic, social, economic and housing components of change together, it can be suggested that economic restructuring and employment growth is reconstituting rural social structures - in that new groups are being attracted to the region, others continue to leave, and, within the existing population redundancies and new job creation are pushing some groups out of the labour market (full-time men, particularly in primary employment), and bringing new groups into formal paid employment (part-time women). Such population change and social recomposition has important consequences for the rural housing market, as both the overall level of competition for housing increases, and the nature of such competition changes - particularly as a result of the higher capital and income levels at the disposable of many incomer households.

In addition, there has been considerable restructuring within the rural housing market, with a major decline in the number of social rental units, and dramatic increases in the costs associated with securing housing, both for rent and purchase. It appears that many rural residents have been forced to defer purchase and seek rented housing either privately or by applying to housing association and local authority waiting lists.

However, as the cost of private rental has increased, and the opportunities of gaining a social rental property have diminished, some households have been forced to rely on inadequate forms of housing - sharing with friends or relatives, remaining in unsuitable housing (in terms of cost, size, facilities or physical structure) - or pushed out of the housing market altogether. It is not insignificant that the demand for social housing in rural Wales has increased dramatically over recent years, and the level of accepted cases of rural homelessness has doubled between 1986-91.

In the second part of the chapter consideration was given to the discussion surrounding the issue of housing affordability within the Welsh countryside, In brief, the section examined the perceptions of rural housing problems, Welsh Office policy aimed at alleviating elements of housing difficulties, and the implementation of such policy at the local level. Such a policy response - allowing for the provision of low-cost housing on village edges for local people in housing need - has been welcomed by a whole host of organisations concerned with housing provision and welfare within the Welsh countryside. Nevertheless, there remain several issues relating to housing need and the provision of affordable housing that require further discussion:

- (i) how do we measure housing need ? - can crude statistical surveys of individual communities provide an accurate indication of the housing difficulties being experienced by sub-groups of the rural population ?;
- (ii) who will co-ordinate and/or finance such local needs surveys ? - it is essential that each community is allowed sufficient financial resources to enable it to carry out a professionally managed, detailed survey of need - whether such a survey is quantitatively or qualitatively based. At present, within rural Wales, some local authorities - Ceredigion, for example - are unable to secure sufficient finance for a district-wide survey of housing needs.

Whilst recognising that such surveys should allow for an input from the local community, they should not be organised solely at the local level, since such a situation could result in the better organised, more articulate community councils obtaining greater funding for reasons of 'shouting loudest' rather than the level of housing need within the community;

- (iii) it can be argued that housing problems represent the symptoms, rather than the causes of wider processes of socio-economic restructuring affecting the countryside. As such, successful policy solutions cannot be based solely on the housing market. There remains a need within the countryside for a concerted integrated inter-agency policy

framework that will bring together housing, social and economic policies. At present, rural policy remains uncoordinated and there is a need for increased communication both within and between the various concerned organisations;

(iv) in many ways, it is too early to assess the success or otherwise of the 'exceptions' policy introduced in 1989. In an English context, Williams *et al* (1991) discovered that although roughly three-quarters of rural districts had formulated such a policy, few had actually approved 'local needs' schemes. Furthermore, those districts which had were concentrated in southern areas of the English countryside. Within rural Wales, around 70% of districts (and National Park authorities) had already implemented, or were planning to implement 'exceptions' housing policies. However, as the authors pointed out, many individuals and organisations involved in such 'exceptions' schemes considered that their overall impact on housing needs within rural communities would be limited, due to problems regarding levels of public funding and with securing suitable, affordable land for development in the right locations. Finally, it was noted that, in many cases, 'exceptions' developments that can be considered low-cost relative to the local open housing market may not be affordable for some groups within the rural community.

Unfortunately, the information presented in Chapter Three has left a number of key issues untouched. It has not dealt with the characteristics of in-moving groups and their motivations behind relocation. Moreover, it has not touched on the process of out-movement, nor the characteristics of the rural housing market at the local level. A need exists for a more detailed examination of both the nature of the housing market and the characteristics of households within such a market at a local level. Such analyses are provided in the remaining chapters of the thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR: HOUSING AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE IN THE CASE-STUDY AREAS 1981-91

4.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters have dealt with the issues of socio-economic change and the restructuring of housing provision in isolation. Chapter Two discussed recent processes of economic restructuring, demographic change and social recomposition affecting areas of rural Wales, whilst, in Chapter Three, consideration was given to the changing nature of housing provision within the Welsh countryside and the policy responses to perceived rural housing problems. In many ways, the present chapter brings together these three components of change - rural housing, economy and population / society at the local level. Its aim is to provide a context for the more detailed investigation of the local housing market which follows (Chapters Five to Seven).

Chapter Four begins with a brief discussion of the rationale behind selection of the case-study areas and a short description of each area. The chapter then proceeds to discuss socio-economic and housing characteristics of each study area and highlights some key changes that have taken place over recent years. In many ways, Chapter Four should be viewed as providing a descriptive overview of each study area which sets the context for the following three chapters. In short, it attempts to compare and contrast processes of change affecting each area, as well as examining internal variations. Much of the analysis which follows is based on 1981 and 1991 Census ward-level data derived from SASPAC (in some cases, wards have been amalgamated to reflect boundary changes between 1981-91), with more limited use made of information derived from the Censuses of Employment and Employment Service. Information is presented in a tabular format throughout the chapter, with a ward base map included for each area (Figure 4.2).

Although such a style of presentation necessitates considerable cross-referencing by the reader, it is felt that this is preferable to whole series of ward-level choropleth maps.

4.2 The selection of the study areas

A critical aim of this research project has been to consider housing issues alongside wider processes of socio-economic change, and in doing so to investigate the links between a changing housing market and economic restructuring social recomposition. To fulfil this aim case-study areas were selected which recorded high rates of both population and employment growth over recent years. However, it was also important that the case-study areas should be geographically diverse. After much consideration, it was decided to focus the more detailed analysis on two case-study areas - the Aberystwyth area, situated within Ceredigion (west mid-Wales), and the Newtown area, located in Montgomeryshire (in the east of the region) (Figure 4.1). Each study area represents a travel-to-work area (TTWA):

"[a] self-contained labour market area...an area defined so that commuting to and from work all occurs within the boundary of the area"
Department of Employment (1984, p2)

The current TTWAs have been defined using information from the 1981 Census of Population, and as such, will no doubt be revised in the next few years based on 1991 Census figures. Each area has a self-containment level of 75% - the number of working residents is at least 75% of both the total number of persons who work in the area and the total number of workers who live in the area. In addition, each TTWA generally contains a working population of at least 3 500. The concept of the TTWA has been criticised by Coombes *et al* (1988) who have argued that it merely represented an amalgam of different commuting patterns, with workers in different socio-economic groups travelling different distances to their workplace. However, even allowing for such a criticism the

TTWA remains a useful spatial area in which to investigate the operations of rural housing markets, employment patterns and population change at the local level.



Figure 4.1: The Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas

4.21 Descriptions of the study areas

The Aberystwyth study area - an area within the district of Ceredigion, in the western region of mid-Wales, and dominated by the university town of Aberystwyth which represents the main place of employment for working residents. The study area is characterised by high levels of recent population growth (9%) and employment growth (16%) during the 1980s. Services dominate the local economy, with the university and other public sector organisations representing major local employers. The area has a high rate of owner-occupation (70%) and a rate of unemployment amongst the lowest within Wales (5.5%, January 1992). Welsh culture and language is strong in the area, with 55% of residents speaking Welsh in 1991.

The Newtown study area - an area situated in the eastern part of mid-Wales, less than 20 miles from the English border, and close to the towns of Welshpool, Montgomery and Shrewsbury. The study area is dominated by two main towns: Newtown - the largest town and a recipient of considerable economic and housing investment from the DBRW over the last 20 years; and Llanidloes - a smaller market town in the west of the study area. The Newtown area has witnessed considerable population growth over recent years (8% between 1981-91), and a high level of employment growth - 11% during the 1980s. Unemployment, in January 1992, stood at 5.9% of the workforce. Services played a less dominant role within the local economy, and manufacturing accounted for around one-third of all occupations. The area has an above average provision of social rental housing, with local authority and housing association properties complemented by DBRW housing provision. Finally, the study area contains a high proportion of English-born residents, and Welsh is spoken by only 16% of residents.

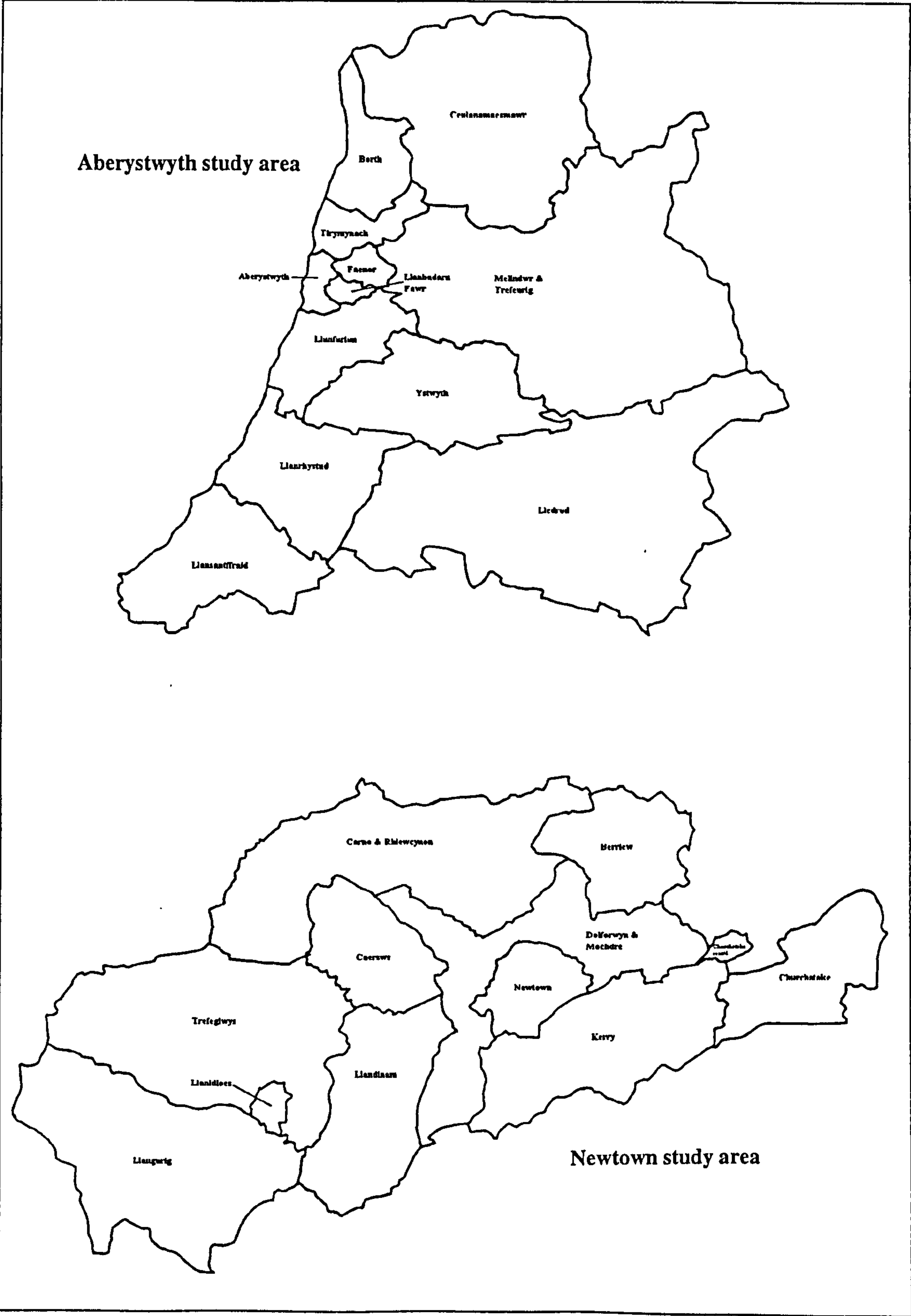


Figure 4.2: Wards within the Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas

4.3 The Aberystwyth study area

4.31 Population change

The Aberystwyth study area has witnessed considerable population growth over recent years, with the 1991 Census recording an increase of 9.3% between 1981-91. The geography of this population increase at a ward level is highlighted in Table 4.1. Three wards recorded growth rates of over 20% - Melindwr and Trefeurig, Llansantffraid and Faenor, whilst two peri-urban wards - Llanfarian and Llanbadarn Fawr - experienced population losses of 2% and 8% respectively. The Aberystwyth urban centre which had witnessed considerable depopulation in the 1970s recorded a slight increase across the 1980s.

Table 4.1: Population change 1981-91 in the Aberystwyth study area - by ward

	1981	1991	1981-91	
			no.	%age
Melindwr & Trefeurig	2 371	3 122	751	31.7
Llansantffraid	1 704	2 099	395	23.2
Faenor	1 404	1 697	293	20.9
Borth	1 592	1 881	289	18.2
Lledrod	1 765	1 996	231	13.1
Llanrhystud	1 158	1 274	116	10.0
Tirymynach	1 414	1 538	124	8.8
Ceulanamaesmawr	1 611	1 714	103	6.4
Ystwyth	1 557	1 638	81	5.2
Aberystwyth	7 868	7 924	56	0.7
Llanfarian	1 135	1 115	-20	-1.8
Llanbadarn Fawr	1 381	1 273	-108	-7.8
Study area	24 960	27 271	2 311	9.3

Source: 1991 Census

The majority of this population growth across the 1980s resulted from positive rates of net in-migration. Indeed, the 1991 Census recorded over 3 000 persons - 12% of the total population - who had moved to their present residence in the previous twelve months. However, almost two-thirds of such in-movers had relocated relatively short distances - 24% had moved from within their present ward, and 40% had moved from elsewhere in

the district. In-migration from other districts of Wales accounted for roughly 9% of all in-movers, whilst only one-fifth of persons relocating to the study area had originated in other regions of Great Britain.

Table 4.2: Previous area of residence of one-year migrants - Aberystwyth study area, 1991

	no.	%age
within present ward	778	24.0
other wards within district	1 281	39.6
other districts within county	66	2.0
other counties within Wales	229	7.1
outside Wales but within G.B.	638	19.7
outside G.B.	245	7.6
total	3 237	

Source: 1991 Census

The geography of these relocations is illustrated in Table 4. 3. Within the study area, the proportion of one-year in-migrant residents ranged from 17% in Aberystwyth to around 8% in the Llanfarian ward. Highest rates of in-movement were concentrated in the wards within and surrounding the Aberystwyth urban centre - Borth (12%); Faenor (11%); Llanbadarn (20%); and Tirymynach (12%).

Table 4.3: The number and proportion of one-year migrants resident in wards - Aberystwyth study area, 1981 and 1991

	<u>1981</u>		<u>1991</u>	
	<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>	<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>
Aberystwyth	994	12.6	1 321	16.7
Borth	231	14.5	230	12.2
Ceulanamaesmawr	134	8.3	146	8.5
Faenor	108	7.7	188	11.1
Llanbadarn Fawr	163	11.8	251	19.7
Llanfarian	180	15.9	94	8.4
Llanrhystud	66	5.7	101	7.9
Llansantffraid	154	9.0	150	7.1
Lledrod	136	7.7	145	7.3
Melindwr & Trefeurig	271	11.4	285	9.1
Tirymynach	114	8.1	184	12.0
Ystwyth	99	6.4	148	9.0

Source: 1991 Census

The pattern of long distance in-movement - from other regions of Great Britain - however, appeared to contradict the geographical distribution of overall in-movement. Highest proportions of long-distance in-movers were recorded in Ceulanamaesmawr

(20%) and Lledrod (31%), with such movers least prominent in the urban and peri-urban wards of Faenor (11%), Llanbadarn (17%) and Aberystwyth (17%).

Table 4.4: One-year migrants from other areas of Great Britain by ward - the Aberystwyth study area, 1991

	no.	%age of all in-movers
Aberystwyth	230	17.4
Borth	56	24.3
Ceulanamaesmawr	49	33.6
Faenor	20	10.6
Llanbadarn Fawr	43	17.1
Llanfarian	19	20.2
Llanrhystud	24	23.8
Llansantffraid	34	22.7
Lledrod	45	31.0
Melindwr & Trefeurig	63	22.1
Tirymynach	36	19.6
Ystwyth	19	12.8

Source: 1991 Census

It is evident from Table 4.5 that roughly two-fifths of movers from other areas of Great Britain were aged between 16-29 years, compared to the mean for rural Wales of 34%. Although it is not clear whether such a high level of young person in-migration is associated with the student population in Aberystwyth, it can be suggested that a considerable proportion of in-movers could be termed 'family-type' households - 23% were aged 30-44 years and 17% were aged under 15 years of age. Less than one-fifth of long-distance in-movement involved persons aged 45 years or over.

Table 4.5: Age structure of one-year migrants moving from other areas of Great Britain - Aberystwyth study area, 1991

	no.	%age
1 - 15 years	108	16.9
16 - 29 years	261	40.9
30 - 44 years	149	23.4
45 - pensionable age	70	11.0
pensionable age & over	50	7.8

Source: 1991 Census

However, as was pointed out in the previous chapter, such gross figures on in-movement conceal levels of out-migration associated with each age group. For example, figures

presented in Chapter Two suggested that persons aged 15-29 years dominated not only in-movement but also out-movement, with slightly higher numbers of such movers leaving rural areas of Wales in 1990.

Migration from other regions of Great Britain was dominated by persons moving from England, and particularly by persons born in England. In fact, in each ward, English-born residents constituted the second most numerous ethnic group, and accounted for more than one-third of the overall population. The intensity of English in-migration to the area can be seen in Table 4.6. During the 1981-91 period, the number of English-born residents in the study area increased by 55% - around 3 400 persons, with rises of over 70% in the English-born population recorded in the wards of Aberystwyth and Lledrod. By 1991, English-born persons constituted more than one-quarter of all residents in each ward with the exception of Tirymynach, and in the ward of Borth, almost half of all residents had been born in England. Such a situation contrasts with that recorded in 1981, when seven wards within the Aberystwyth study area contained less than 25% of their population born in England.

Table 4.6: Percentage of persons born in England in the Aberystwyth study area, 1991 and 1981-91

	<u>1981</u>	1991	<u>1981-91</u>	
			<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>
Aberystwyth	20.3	37.8	1 402	88.0
Borth	41.1	46.7	265	45.0
Ceulanamaesmawr	29.3	34.3	135	28.7
Faenor	25.5	25.6	89	24.9
Llanbadarn Fawr	21.9	25.4	70	23.2
Llanfarian	24.6	25.6	15	5.4
Llanrhystud	24.8	31.8	124	43.2
Llansantffraid	28.2	36.1	294	61.3
Lledrod	23.5	34.8	302	72.9
Melindwr & Trefeurig	28.5	35.7	441	65.3
Tirymynach	21.5	23.3	59	19.3
Ystwyth	22.1	33.0	209	60.0
Study area	24.7	35.1	3 405	55.3

Source: 1991 Census

In-movement through the 1980s has altered the age structure of the population within the study area. It can be seen from Table 4.7 that the greatest growth rates have taken place amongst so-called 'family-type households' - a 23% rise in 25-44 year olds and a 25% increase in children aged under 4 years - seemingly contradicting the accepted wisdom of a mainly middle-to-elderly age group in-movement to rural areas. In fact, the number of persons aged over 44 years rose by only 14% in the 1981-91 period. Overall, population increases were recorded across all age groups, in contrast to rural Wales as a whole which witnessed losses of persons aged 5-14 and 15-24 years. Furthermore, the rate of increase of 'family-type' households was much higher in the Aberystwyth study area than the mean for rural Wales.

Table 4.7: The changing age structure in the Aberystwyth study area, 1981-91

	1981		1991		1981-91	
	no.	%age	no.	%age	no.	%age
0 -4 years	1 355	5.4	1 694	6.0	339	25.0
5 - 14 years	3 240	13.0	3 286	11.6	46	1.4
15 - 24 years	3 487	14.0	3 683	13.0	196	5.6
25 -44 years	6 441	25.9	7 925	27.9	1 484	23.0
45 - 59 years	4 313	17.3	4 881	17.2	568	13.2
60 years & over	6 065	24.4	6 953	24.5	880	14.6

Source: 1991 Census

The geography of this changing age structure is highlighted in Table 4.8. Almost all wards showed population increases across the six age groups, with the exception of 5-14 year olds where an equal number of wards experienced population gains and losses. Greatest increases in 'young family-type' households (persons aged 25-44 and 0-4 years) existed in four wards - Melindwr and Trefeurig (50%, 50%); Borth (44%, 68%); Aberystwyth (26%, 42%) and Llansantffraid (28%, 30%). Growth rates for elderly persons (over 59 years) were highest in the wards of Faenor (138%), Llansantffraid (39%) and Melindwr and Trefeurig (38%).

Table 4.8: Changing age structure 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
Aberystwyth	41.6	-9.5	1.1	26.3	-6.6	1.9
Borth	68.0	18.9	-7.1	43.8	32.5	15.3
Ceulanamaesmawr	7.5	-11.5	11.0	12.1	23.7	12.0
Faenor	15.1	-9.1	44.6	0.5	35.4	138.1
Llanbadarn Fawr	9.0	1.2	14.7	43.8	-23.6	-9.5
Llanfarian	4.3	-42.9	7.6	-1.9	23.3	21.4
Llanrhystud	5.2	10.1	-3.5	15.8	20.2	5.6
Llansantffraid	29.6	35.6	-17.4	27.8	29.5	38.6
Lledrod	5.1	22.4	21.7	11.4	30.6	7.9
Melindwr & Trefeurig	50.0	35.5	8.9	49.9	28.2	37.6
Tirymynach	-14.9	-2.4	19.7	5.2	41.2	5.5
Ystwyth	17.8	-14.7	4.3	15.6	4.6	14.5

Source: 1991 Census

The effects of these changes on the 1991 age structure in the case study area are illustrated in Table 4. 9. Almost one-quarter of residents living in the Aberystwyth study area in 1991 were aged over 59 years, with a further 17% aged between 45-59 years. This said, each ward was dominated by persons aged 25-44 years, and this age group made up around 26% of total residents in the area. Younger residents - aged under 25 years - accounted for three out of ten people in the study area, although this proportion represented a slight reduction on the situation recorded in 1981. Elderly persons comprised more than one-quarter of the population in only two wards - Aberystwyth (27%) and Llansantffraid (27%), whilst in the wards of Melindwr and Trefeurig and Ystwyth, 25-44 year olds comprised more than 30% of the total population.

Table 4.9: The age structure 1991 - Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
Aberystwyth	5.4	9.2	15.8	27.3	15.3	27.0
Borth	5.6	10.4	10.4	23.6	16.1	21.8
Ceulanamaesmawr	6.5	11.7	12.0	28.3	17.4	24.2
Faenor	5.7	12.0	13.7	23.5	20.4	24.7
Llanbadarn Fawr	50.1	11.9	14.9	32.9	14.4	20.9
Llanfarian	4.2	9.4	14.7	26.5	20.2	25.0
Llanrhystud	6.3	14.4	10.8	29.7	16.8	22.1
Llansantffraid	7.0	13.0	9.0	26.1	19.1	27.1
Lledrod	6.1	14.2	11.8	27.2	18.1	22.6
Melindwr & Trefeurig	7.5	13.5	10.3	30.8	16.3	21.6
Tirymynach	5.1	13.0	12.1	27.1	20.7	22.1
Ystwyth	6.3	11.4	11.7	30.0	17.5	23.1
Study area	5.4	13.0	14.0	25.9	17.3	24.4

Source: 1991 Census

The Welsh language

High levels of predominantly English in-migration have important implications for the Welsh language and culture of the area. Although Welsh language usage and culture remain strong within the Aberystwyth study area - almost 55% of residents spoke Welsh in 1991 - important cultural changes have taken place throughout the 1980s. These changes largely reflect those reported in Chapter Two in respect to rural Wales as a whole. In short, whilst the absolute number of Welsh speakers increased by 1.2%, or 174 persons between 1981-91, the proportion of people able to speak the language dropped from 59.1% of the total population in 1981 to 54.7% in 1991 (Table 4.10). Indeed, in each ward the proportion speaking Welsh fell through the 1980s. In absolute terms, however, seven wards recorded an increase in numbers speaking Welsh - ranging from 6 people (0.5%) in Lledrod to 192 people (28.6%) in Faenor.

By 1991, Welsh speakers comprised more than 60% of the resident population in only four wards - Llanrhystud, Lledrod, Tirymynach and Ystwyth - compared to eight wards ten years previous. In a further four wards - Aberystwyth, Borth, Ceulanamaesmawr and Llanbadarn - under half of the population were able to speak Welsh.

Table 4.10: Percentage of residents speaking Welsh in the Aberystwyth study area, 1981-91 and 1991

	1981	1991	1981-91	
			no.	%age
Aberystwyth	47.7	43.0	-65	-1.8
Borth	47.1	42.2	104	14.3
Ceulanamaesmawr	65.6	59.4	41	4.0
Faenor	49.7	49.3	192	28.6
Llanbadarn Fawr	52.5	43.8	-60	-8.5
Llanfarian	61.2	58.1	-7	-1.0
Llanrhystud	72.9	65.2	32	4.0
Llansantffraid	68.4	59.9	167	15.0
Lledrod	77.2	63.5	6	0.5
Melindwr & Trefeurig	68.6	56.3	-278	-13.3
Tirymynach	66.4	63.3	86	9.6
Ystwyth	71.4	61.8	-44	-4.1
Study area	59.1	54.7	174	1.2

Source: 1991 Census

4.32 Employment change

Alongside changes in the social and cultural composition, the study area has also witnessed considerable economic restructuring throughout the 1980s. In general terms, the number of persons in employment within the study area increased by more than 1 500, or 16% between 1981-91, with employment growth recorded in each ward. An analysis of the components of this growth reveals that employment trends within the study area have largely mirrored those reported in the previous chapter for rural Wales.

The vast majority of employment growth has taken place in female-based employment - the number of women in employment increased by 29% in the 1981-91 period, compared to a growth rate of less than 8% for male workers. In fact, three wards actually witnessed losses in their male workforce across the 1980s - Aberystwyth, Faenor and Tirymynach. Greatest increases in resident female workers were recorded in the outlying wards of Melindwr and Trefeurig (222%), Llanrhystud (47%) and Lledrod (41%).

Table 4.11: Percentage change in persons in employment 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area

	<u>men</u>	<u>women</u>
Aberystwyth	-0.6	10.0
Borth	16.2	36.4
Ceulanamaesmawr	8.3	36.1
Faenor	13.7	33.8
Llanbadarn Fawr	-3.1	18.6
Llanfarian	8.9	35.6
Llanrhystud	6.3	46.9
Llansantffraid	12.0	26.9
Lledrod	12.6	40.7
Melindwr & Trefeurig	27.1	222.0
Tirymynach	9.9	31.6
Ystwyth	-2.9	24.1
Study area	7.6	28.9

Source: 1991 Census

Table 4.12 provides a breakdown of employment change by gender and work type. Although full-time employment accounted for almost two-thirds of men in employment, the number of full-time male workers fell by 4.4% in the 1981-91 period. Similarly, the number of men in self-employment without employees, although accounting for around one-fifth of all male workers, witnessed a slight reduction across the 1980s. The greatest increase in male employment occurred amongst part-time employees, with the number of such workers almost doubling between 1981-91. This said, part-time work accounted for less than 5% of all men in employment in 1991. About 10% of working men were in self-employment with employees - an increase of about one-quarter on the situation in 1981.

In 1991, a majority of women in employment were engaged in full-time work - an increase of almost 30% since 1981. Growth rates of more than one-third were recorded for part-time employees (35%) and self-employed women (38% for those with employees, 39% for women without employees). By 1991, a much higher proportion of women were engaged in part-time employment (36%) than men (4%), whilst rates of self-employment were less than half those recorded amongst the male workforce. Moreover, in

1991, the outcome of such employment change was that women constituted roughly 44% of the total workforce, compared to only 38% ten years previous.

Table 4.12: The changing structure of employment 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area (employees)

	<u>men</u>		<u>women</u>	
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1981-91</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1981-91</u>
employees - full-time	66.1	-4.4	51.9	29.2
employees - part-time	4.4	96.5	36.0	34.7
self-employed with employees	10.3	26.0	3.6	37.7
self-employed without employees	19.2	-2.4	8.5	39.2
<i>%age of total workforce</i>	55.7		44.3	

Source: 1991 Census

Changing employment sectors

The dramatic growth in female and part-time employment over recent years has been closely associated with the changing nature of the local economy. This section examines the changing occupational structure of persons in employment between 1981-89, based on information from the Census of Employment obtained through NOMIS. The statistics presented, however, should be treated as indicative of employment change, since they relate only to employees and are based on small samples. Furthermore, employee totals have been rounded to the nearest 100 persons and totals of less than 100 have been suppressed for reasons of confidentiality. However, in the absence of the 10% employment statistics from the 1991 Population Census, the Census of Employment provides a valuable source of information on economic restructuring and employment changes at the local - travel-to-work area - level.

Table 4.13 highlights the importance of the service sector in the overall employment growth within the Aberystwyth study area. Of the 2 300 increase in employees between 1981-89, 1 800 persons (78%) were employed in service-related occupations. Within the service sector, the 'distribution, hotels and catering' sub-sector experienced the greatest

growth level. Outside of services, employment growth was also recorded in 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' (+200 persons) and manufacturing (+200 employees). Construction related employment witnessed a reduction of about 100 persons, and a minimal change was recorded within the 'energy and water' sector.

Table 4.13: The changing employment structure of the Aberystwyth study area - 1981-89 (employees)

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1981-89</u>	
			<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1 000	1 200	200	20.2
Energy and water supply	200	200	0	0.0
Manufacturing industries	300	500	200	66.7
Construction	300	200	-100	-33.3
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	1 600	2 600	1 000	62.5
Transport, communication, banking and finance	900	1 000	100	11.1
Public administration and defence	2 700	3 000	300	11.1
Other service industries	3 400	3 800	400	11.8
<i>All services</i>	<i>8 600</i>	<i>10 400</i>	<i>1 800</i>	<i>20.9</i>
Total	10 300	12 600	2 300	22.3

Source: NOMIS

The dominance of the service sector is evident from Table 4.14 which shows the employment structure in 1989. Over 80% of all employees were engaged in the sector, with the next most dominant sector - 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' - employing less than 10% of the total workforce. The service sector dominated across all types of employment. Over two-thirds of full-time male workers and more than 70% of part-time men were employed in services, whilst over 90% of female full- and part-time employees were engaged in the sector. The only other significant sector within the study area was 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' - which accounted for around 19% of full-time and 14% of part-time men. In addition, 6% of full-time male employees were engaged in the construction sector.

Table 4.14: Employment structure 1989 - Aberystwyth study area (employees)

Agriculture, forestry and fishing	9.5
Energy and water supply	1.6
Manufacturing industries	4.0
Construction	1.6
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	20.6
Transport, communication, banking and finance	7.9
Public administration and defence	23.8
Other service industries	30.2
<i>All services</i>	82.5

Source: NOMIS

Vacancies

An indication of the types of new employment available in the study area can be gleaned from Table 4.15 which shows job vacancies notified to Aberystwyth Job Centre in 1986 and 1991. Four main occupational groups dominated new employment vacancies in each year - catering; cleaning and personal services; clerical and machine operators; and selling (distribution) - accounting for 63% of total vacancies in 1986 and 66% of notified vacancies in 1991. Three of these occupational groupings represented the sectors witnessing the greatest levels of increase between 1986-91 - clerical and machine operators (+243); cleaning and personal services (+102); and catering (101). The number of management-type vacancies grew by 65 in this same period.

Table 4.15: Notified vacancies (over 20) to the Aberystwyth job centre by occupational groups - 1986 and 1991

1986	no.	%age	1991	no.	%age
catering	317	19.4	clerical & machine operators	425	19.3
cleaning & personal services	297	18.1	catering	418	19.0
selling - distribution	234	14.3	cleaning & personal services	399	18.1
clerical & machine operators	182	11.1	selling - distribution	215	9.8
typing & secretarial	105	6.4	managerial	158	7.2
managerial	93	5.7	farming & fishing	70	3.2
nursing	62	3.8	nursing	54	2.5
farming & fishing	47	2.9	painting	53	2.4
transport operators - others	46	2.8	transport operators - others	53	2.4
selling - others	39	2.4	material processing - food	47	2.1
painting	22	1.3	construction - skilled	44	2.0
making / repairs - textiles/cloth	21	1.3	selling - others	40	1.8
total	1 637		typing & secretarial	39	1.8
			making / repairing - others	37	1.7
			total	2 200	

Source: Employment Service

Examples of the types of jobs available in the Aberystwyth study area are provided below based on a sample taken from the local press in April and December 1989:

part-time washer-up hotel in Aberystwyth	part-time cleaner
reception, waiting, bar-person	creamery worker
and chamber person - hotel	insurance company salesperson
receptionist dental surgery	clerk/typist - local authority
cleaners holiday village	part-time shop assistant
chef and receptionist hotel	kitchen and waiting staff restaurant
financial services manager	seasonal staff Borth holiday park
life assurance representative/seller	van sales person (commission) -
(commission) - bank	confectionery firm
deliver driver equipment hire company	sales representative (commission) -
	north-west Wales

Advertised vacancies showed a marked seasonal variation, with many 'low-quality' holiday and tourist related job advertisements appearing in the job centre and local press in the Spring months. Better paid, higher quality, more secure management and professional type jobs tended to be associated with public sector and larger private sector organisations - the councils, banks, the health authority, and university.

Unemployment

In January 1992, 900 residents in the Aberystwyth study area were officially registered as unemployed and claiming benefit - a rate of 5.5% of the workforce and considerably lower than the mean rate recorded for Great Britain as a whole. The unemployment rate amongst men was more than double that recorded for women (7.5%/3.1%).

Unemployment levels declined throughout much of the 1984-92 period (current TTWAs were introduced in 1984) as can be seen in Table 4.16. Unemployment totals increased from 1984 and peaked in 1985-86 when a rate of 10% was recorded. Between July 1986 - July 1989, levels of unemployment fell consistently from 10.1% to 3.9%. Since then, unemployment rates have started to rise again, and in January 1992, the level had increased to 5.5% of the workforce.

Table 4.16: Unemployment levels 1985-92 in the Aberystwyth study area

<i>percentage of the workforce unemployed</i>			
Jan 1984	8.1	Jan 1988	8.5
Jul 1984	8.8	Jul 1988	7.5
Jan 1985	9.3	Jan 1989	5.8
Jul 1985	10.2	Jul 1989	3.9
Jan 1986	10.0	Jan 1990	4.1
Jul 1986	10.1	Jul 1990	4.2
Jan 1987	9.5	Jan 1991	4.6
Jul 1987	9.4	Jul 1991	5.5
		Jan 1992	5.5

Source: Employment Service

The majority of unemployed persons were aged 20-39 years (64% of men and women). However, persons aged 50 years and over accounted for 13% of the unemployed total in January 1992. In terms of the length of time unemployed, over 60% of unemployed persons had been 'out of work' for less than 6 months. Around one-fifth of such persons had been registered unemployed for 6-12 months, and a further 10% had been out of work for between 1-2 years. Only 5% of people had been unemployed for more than 2 years, with a higher proportion of men in this position (18% compared to 10% of women).

Table 4.17: The characteristics of unemployment in the Aberystwyth study area - Jan. 1992

<u>unemployment by age</u>				<u>unemployment by duration</u>			
	all	male	female		all	male	female
17 - 19	6.4	6.1	7.3	under 6 months	63.9	61.5	70.8
20 - 29	43.7	42.7	46.4	6 - 12 months	20.6	21.0	19.3
30 - 39	20.6	21.7	17.6	1 - 2 years	10.2	11.4	6.9
40 - 49	16.3	16.1	16.7	over 2 years	5.3	6.1	3.0
50 - 59	11.5	11.2	12.1				
60+	1.4	1.9	0.0				

Source: Employment Service

4.33 Housing

Accompanying these socio-economic changes reported above has been a restructuring of housing provision within the study area. This final section of the Aberystwyth analysis considers three aspects of the local housing market - housing tenure, leisure homes and housing conditions.

Tenure

The housing market within the Aberystwyth study area - like that of rural Wales - is dominated by the private sector. In 1991, seven out of ten households were owner-occupiers, an almost identical rate to that recorded for rural Wales as a whole. Such a level of private ownership represented a 35% increase during the 1980s. By contrast, the number of households living in local authority rented property fell by around one-quarter between 1981 and 1991 - from 18% to 11% - with the provision of such housing amongst the lowest in the rural region. Although housing associations have taken over from the local authority as the main provider of social housing in the area, their impact has been minimal - the number of association rentals increased by only 99 households over the 1980s, with the sector accounting for less than 2% of all households in 1991. In short, the main outcome of such housing change has been that more than 300 social rental

households / dwellings were lost during the 1980s, a decline of about 19% on the situation recorded in 1981.

Although a considerable proportion of households previously living in council houses will have purchased their home under provisions contained within the 1980s housing legislation, other households, which would have traditionally expected to move into social housing have been forced to move into the private rented sector, particularly furnished rented accommodation. In 1991, around 9% of households were residing in rented furnished accommodation in the private sector - an increase of 72% on the number living in such housing ten years previous. The remaining types of private rental - unfurnished accommodation and tied housing - recorded losses of 28% and 42% respectively in numbers of households between 1981-91.

Table 4.18: Household tenure 1981 and 1991 - the Aberystwyth study area

	<u>1981</u>		<u>1991</u>		<u>Rural Wales</u>
	<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>	<u>no.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>mean 1991</u>
owner-occupation	6 095	62.8	8 203	70.8	70.2
local authority or new town rented housing association rented	1 750	18.0	1 322	11.4	18.0
private rented - furnished	629	6.5	1 084	9.4	3.6
private rented - unfurnished	855	8.8	612	5.3	5.3
private rented - with job or business	287	3.0	167	1.4	2.7

Source: 1991 Census

The geography of tenurial change

Owner-occupation - in eleven of the twelve wards in the Aberystwyth study area owner-occupation accounted for more than 70% of total households. Indeed, in three wards - Llanfarian, Faenor and Melindwr and Trefeurig - in excess of eight out of ten households 'owned' their property. By contrast, in the Aberystwyth ward, owner-occupation accounted for only around half of all households. Greatest rates of increase in owner-

occupier households across the 1980s were recorded in the wards of Faenor (44%), Llansantffraid (53%) and Ystwyth (57%).

Table 4.19: Percentage of owner-occupied households 1991 and 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area

	1991	1981-91
Aberystwyth	49.6	38.2
Borth	77.2	39.0
Ceulanamaesmawr	74.3	31.2
Faenor	82.1	44.1
Llanbadarn Fawr	73.1	1.5
Llanfarian	80.5	37.8
Llanrhystud	79.0	26.5
Llansantffraid	79.3	53.4
Lledrod	76.5	33.6
Melindwr & Trefeurig	82.3	21.1
Tirymynach	76.6	33.3
Ystwyth	76.9	57.2
Study area	70.8	34.6

Source: 1991 Census

Local authority rentals - in only three wards did the proportion of households living in local authority rental housing account for more than one-tenth of all households - Aberystwyth (20%), Tirymynach (13%) and Llanbadarn (10%). Lowest rates of council rental households were recorded in the wards of Borth, Llanfarian, Llanrhystud and Melindwr and Trefeurig - where less than 5% of households rented from the local authority. The greatest contraction in local authority rentals was recorded in Llanfarian - where around two-thirds of such households moved to other tenures during the 1980s, and 'losses' of more than 30% were recorded in the wards of Borth, Tirymynach and Melindwr and Trefeurig.

Table 4.20: Percentage of households renting from the local authority, 1991 and 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area

	1991	1981-91
Aberystwyth	19.5	-21.9
Borth	4.4	-31.4
Ceulanamaesmawr	9.3	-5.7
Faenor	8.7	-21.1
Llanbadarn Fawr	10.1	-23.6
Llanfarian	4.2	-63.5
Llanrhystud	3.9	0.0
Llansantffraid	7.2	-13.0
Lledrod	8.2	-30.4
Melindwr & Trefeurig	4.9	-42.1
Tirymynach	12.8	-37.2
Ystwyth	7.0	-6.1
Study area	11.4	-24.5

Source: 1991 Census

Housing association rental - the vast majority of households living in association properties (72%) were located in the Aberystwyth wards. This said, even in the urban area, such provision accounted for less than 4% of all households. Across the study area, housing associations represented the tenure of more than 1% of households in only three other wards - Faenor (3.3%), Llanbadarn (1.2% and Tirymynach (1.2%). Indeed, in the wards of Llanfarian and Lledrod no housing association provision existed. During the 1981-91 period, greatest increases in association provision occurred in the Aberystwyth urban area (+63) and the ward of Faenor (+21) situated in the urban periphery, with reductions recorded in two wards - Llanfarian and Lledrod.

Table 4.21: Percentage of households renting from housing associations 1991 and 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area

	1991	1981-91
Aberystwyth	3.6	84.0
Borth	0.5	33.3
Ceulanamaesmawr	0.4	50.0
Faenor	3.3	105.0
Llanbadarn Fawr	1.3	600.0
Llanfarian	0.0	-100.0
Llanrhystud	0.4	100.0
Llansantffraid	0.2	100.0
Lledrod	0.0	-100.0
Melindwr & Trefeurig	0.2	50.0
Tirymynach	1.2	0.0
Ystwyth	0.3	0.0
Study area	1.6	107.6

Source: 1991 Census

Private rental - between 1981-91, the number of *furnished* private rental households in the study area increased by around 72%. Growth rates were recorded in ten wards - ranging from 13% in Llansantffraid to 242% in Llanbadarn, whilst the wards of Llanfarian and Melindwr witnessed losses of 6% and 25% respectively. Furnished private rentals were most prominent in the Aberystwyth urban area - accounting for almost one-fifth of households, with a further three wards - Borth, Llanbadarn and Ystwyth - each containing over 5% of households within this tenure in 1991.

All wards, with the exception of Borth, recorded losses of households residing in *unfurnished* private rented accommodation across the 1980s - ranging from 9% in Lledrod to 68% in Faenor. In 1991, highest proportions of such households existed in four wards - Ceulanamaesmawr, Llansantffraid, Lledrod and Llanrhystud - with roughly 7% of households living in unfurnished rental accommodation.

Households renting accommodation with their *job or business* represented the least dominant form of private rental - accounting for 1.4% of total households in the study area. In 1991, 'tied' households were most prominent in the wards of Llanfarian (4.2%),

Llanrhystud (3.1%) and Ystwyth (3.1%), and only three wards recorded increases in such households across the 1980s.

Table 4.22: Percentage of private rental households 1991 and 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area

	furnished		unfurnished		rented with job or business	
	1991	1981-91	1991	1981-91	1991	1981-91
Aberystwyth	18.5	81.8	5.1	-35.3	2.7	-87.8
Borth	9.4	32.1	4.4	12.9	1.8	-30.0
Ceulanamaesmawr	4.9	29.6	7.6	-14.3	2.3	-11.1
Faenor	3.2	83.3	1.0	-66.7	1.6	120.0
Llanbadarn Fawr	7.6	241.7	3.5	-34.5	1.7	-10.0
Llanfarian	3.7	-5.6	5.5	-19.4	4.2	35.7
Llanrhystud	4.3	133.3	7.1	-28.6	3.1	-16.7
Llansantffraid	2.0	13.3	7.6	-13.3	2.0	-19.0
Lledrod	4.5	105.9	7.5	-9.2	2.7	16.7
Melindwr & Trefeurig	4.4	-25.0	5.1	-53.0	1.8	-46.7
Tirymynach	2.4	55.6	2.2	-55.2	1.2	-46.2
Ystwyth	5.2	126.7	5.7	-33.9	3.1	-33.3
Study area	9.4	72.3	5.3	-28.4	1.4	-41.8

Source: 1991 Census

Seasonal homes

In 1991, the Census of Population recorded 536 second and holiday homes within the Aberystwyth study area (4.3% of the total housing stock), a slight reduction (1%) on the situation recorded ten years previous. Such a decrease had resulted from a loss of second residences rather than holiday homes, with numbers of the former declining by about 6% during the 1980s, whilst the latter reported an increase of 20% across the decade. Indeed, within the study area, only three wards recorded a decrease in the number of holiday homes, in contrast to the eight wards that witnessed a loss of second residences.

In 1991, second homes outnumbered holiday residences by a ratio of more than three to one, with higher numbers of second homes recorded in nine of the twelve wards. Such seasonal properties were most pronounced in the wards of Borth (14%), Melindwr (7%) and Lledrod (6%), whilst least frequent in the urban and peri-urban wards of

Aberystwyth, Llanbadarn and Faenor - where second and holiday homes accounted for less than 1% of all properties.

Table 4.23: Percentage of second and holiday homes, 1991 and 1981-91 - the Aberystwyth study area

	1991		1981-91	
	second homes	holiday homes	second homes	holiday homes
Aberystwyth	0.4	0.2	38.5	200.0
Borth	12.2	1.8	-8.0	-32.1
Ceulanamaesmawr	3.0	20.	-54.7	220.0
Faenor	0.5	0.3	*	100.0
Llanbadarn Fawr	0.5	0.0	-50.0	0.0
Llanfarian	2.2	0.6	10.0	*
Llanrhystud	3.7	2.1	-19.2	-26.3
Llansantffraid	2.3	2.5	-25.8	400.0
Lledrod	5.5	0.8	-23.9	-56.3
Melindwr & Trefeurig	6.3	1.0	49.2	27.3
Tirymynach	0.6	0.6	-50.0	33.3
Ystwyth	1.0	1.5	-74.1	0.0
Study area	3.2	1.1	-5.9	19.6

* increases from zero stock level

Source: 1991 Census

The condition of the housing stock

Poor housing conditions within the study area did not appear to constitute a significant problem. The 1991 Census recorded only 2% of households without access to either a bath / shower, or inside toilet. However, such a figure masks the considerable spatial variations in housing conditions within the study area. Almost 5% of households in the outlying wards of Llanrhystud and Lledrod lacked an inside WC, in contrast to four other wards which recorded less than 1% of households without such an amenity.

Table 4.24: Households lacking basic amenities 1991 - the Aberystwyth study area

	<u>no bath</u> <u>or shower</u>	<u>no inside</u> <u>W.C.</u>
Aberystwyth	0.7	0.6
Borth	0.8	0.4
Ceulanamaesmawr	2.3	1.7
Faenor	0.6	0.4
Llanbadarn Fawr	0.4	1.1
Llanfarian	2.0	3.1
Llanrhystud	3.1	4.9
Llansantffraid	2.9	3.1
Lledrod	4.8	4.6
Melindwr & Trefeurig	3.2	2.5
Tirymynach	0.3	0.3
Ystwyth	3.2	3.1
Study area	2.1	2.2

Source: 1991 Census

In summary, the Aberystwyth study area is one characterised by a high rate of population in-movement over recent years, characterised by younger age groups and a significant proportion of English-born, English-speaking people. The local labour market is dominated by the service sector and the study area recorded a low rate of unemployment. Finally, seven out of ten households were property owners. The following section considers such processes of change - population, employment and housing - within the Newtown study area. Key similarities and differences between the two study areas are then presented in the summary.

4.4 The Newtown study area

4.41 Population change

The Newtown study area has recorded considerable population growth over recent years, with an increase of 8% witnessed across the 1980s. Within the study area, population growth rates exhibited a marked east-west contrast, with the eastern wards of Dolforwyn and Mochdre (24%), Newtown (11%), Churchstoke (10%) and Carno (9%) showing the greatest increases (Table 4.25). This said, one eastern ward - Berriew - recorded a population loss, and the most westerly ward of Llangurig witnessed a 10% population increase between 1981-91. Only one other ward - Llandinam - recorded a decline in population.

Table 4.25: Population change 1981-91 in the Newtown study area - by ward

	1981	1991	1981-91	
			no.	%age
Dolforwyn	1 788	2 222	434	24.3
Newtown	9 291	10 278	987	10.6
Churchstoke	1 177	1 293	116	9.9
Llangurig	603	661	58	9.6
Carno	1 662	1 812	150	9.0
Llanidloes	2 396	2 563	167	7.0
Kerry	1 557	1 633	76	4.9
Caersws	1 390	1 453	63	4.5
Trefeglwys	1 293	1 317	24	1.9
Llandinam	897	838	-59	-6.6
Berriew	1 403	1 285	-118	-8.4
Study area	23 457	25 355	1 898	8.1

Source: 1991 Census

Such levels of population growth have resulted from a considerable rate of in-movement to the study area. For example, whilst the overall population total increased by around 8%, the number of residents born in England grew by 40% in the 1981-91 period - an increase of almost 3 000 persons. The geography of this English in-movement in many ways contradicts the pattern of general population increase (see Table 2.26). Of the five

wards that recorded growth rates of at least 50% in English residents, three were situated in the western part of the study area - Trefeglwys (64%); Llangurig (63%) and Caersws (50%). However, the wards of Dolforwyn and Mochdre and Carno and Rhiewcynon recorded both high rates of general population increase (24% and 9% respectively) and high levels of growth amongst English-born residents (62% and 65% respectively).

Table 4.26: Percentage of persons born in England 1991 and percentage change 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	1991	1981-91
Berriew	40.4	22.6
Caersws	25.2	50.4
Carno	39.4	64.6
Churchstoke	65.6	29.7
Dolforwyn	39.2	62.2
Kerry	38.7	31.9
Llandinam	30.8	26.4
Llangurig	30.5	62.5
Llanidloes	20.3	35.5
Newtown	44.6	36.4
Trefeglwys	30.9	64.0
Study area	40.1	39.1

Source: 1991 Census

Although in-movement of English-born persons appeared greatest in western parts of the study area, eastern wards contained the highest proportions of English residents. Across the whole area, four out of ten residents had been born in England (in Aberystwyth the corresponding proportion was 35%). The highest proportion of English-born persons were found in the eastern wards of Churchstoke (67%), Newtown (45%) and Berriew (40%), with a further three wards showing proportions of more than 38%. Only in two wards - Llanidloes and Caersws - did English-born residents constitute less than 30% of the total population, in contrast to 1981, when six wards recorded fewer than three out of ten residents born in England.

A further indication of the intensity of in-movement is provided by Table 4.27 which highlights the proportions of residents with a different address one year previous to the

1991 Census. Recent in-movers appeared most prominent in the eastern parts of the study area, with such persons constituting roughly 10% of total residents in the wards of Newtown, Dolforwyn and Mochdre, and Caersws. This said, in each ward persons who had moved within the last 12 months constituted at least 5% of the total population. In addition, in 7 wards, the proportion of one-year migrants in 1991 was greater than that recorded ten years previous.

Table 4.27: The proportion of residents with a different address one year previous to the 1991 Census - Newtown study area

	1981		1991	
	no.	%age	no.	%age
Berriew	61	4.3	65	5.1
Caersws	71	5.1	145	10.0
Carno	141	8.5	164	9.1
Churchstoke	79	6.7	126	9.7
Dolforwyn	149	8.3	231	10.4
Kerry	89	9.4	106	6.5
Llandinam	84	9.4	66	7.9
Llangurig	37	6.1	48	7.3
Llanidloes	196	8.2	211	8.2
Newtown	1 157	12.5	1 100	10.7
Trefeglwys	82	6.3	112	8.5

Source: 1991 Census

The vast majority of persons who had moved within the 12 month period prior to the Census had relocated relatively short distances - 31% had moved within their present ward, and 40% had previously lived elsewhere in the district (Montgomeryshire). Only 6% had moved from other areas of Wales, and slightly more than one-fifth of one-year migrants had moved from other regions of Great Britain, predominantly areas of England.

Table 4.28: Previous area of residence of one-year migrants - Newtown study area, 1991

	no.	%age
within present ward	753	30.6
other wards within district	979	39.8
other districts within county	45	1.8
other counties within Wales	105	4.3
outside Wales but within G.B.	526	21.4
outside G.B.	2 462	
total		

Source: 1991 Census

Whilst, it might be expected that the wards closest to the English border would record the highest rates of in-movement from areas 'outside Wales', certain western wards contained amongst the highest proportions of such persons. For example, recent in-movement was most prominent in the eastern wards of Berriew (49%) and Kerry (34%), with the next three highest rates recorded in the wards of Llandinam (26%), Llangurig (25%) and Trefeglwys (22%) - situated in western parts of the study area.

Table 4.29: One-year migrants from other areas of Great Britain 1991 - the Newtown study area

	no.	%age
Berriew	32	49.2
Caersws	145	10.0
Carno	164	9.1
Churchstoke	126	9.7
Dolforwyn	231	10.4
Kerry	36	34.0
Llandinam	17	25.8
Llangurig	12	25.0
Llanidloes	40	19.0
Newtown	179	16.3
Trefeglwys	25	22.3

Source: 1991 Census

It can be suggested that relatively high levels of 'outside Wales' in-movement to these more remote westerly wards might involve retirement-based more than employment-based in-migration. Such an assumption is confirmed by an age breakdown of such in-movers across the study area. Whilst, roughly 28% of in-movers to the Newtown study area from other areas of Great Britain were aged over 44 years, in the wards of

Llangurig, Trefeglwys and Llandinam the corresponding proportions were 50%, 40% and 29% respectively.

The age structure of recent in-movers from outside Wales corresponded closely to that reported earlier for the whole of rural Wales, with the bulk of in-movement involving persons aged 16-29 years (32%) and 30-44 years (22%).

Table 4.30: Age structure of one-year migrants moving from other areas of Great Britain - Newtown study area, 1991

	no.	%age
1 - 15 years	93	17.7
16 - 29 years	167	31.9
30 - 44 years	115	21.9
45 - pensionable age	80	15.3
pensionable age & over	69	13.2
<i>Source: 1991 Census</i>		

The cultural impacts of such a high level of non-Welsh, predominantly English, in-movement have been less marked in the Newtown study area than in the Aberystwyth area. The reasons for this are two-fold: firstly, Welsh is spoken by fewer residents - only 16% of residents in the study area spoke Welsh in 1991, although such a figure represented a slight increase on the situation recorded in 1981 (15%); and second, eastern parts of the area have witnessed historical English-Welsh population movements (see Cloke and Milbourne, 1992). Welsh language usage was most prominent in the more remote wards of Trefeglwys (35%), Llangurig (22%) and Caersws (21%) in the west, and Carno and Rhiewcynon (31%) in the north. Welsh speakers constituted less than 10% of all residents in three wards - Churchstoke (5%), Kerry (8%) and Berriew (9%) (Table 4.31).

Table 4.31: Percentage of residents speaking Welsh, 1991 and 1981-91 - Newtown study area

	1991	1981-91	
		no.	%age
Berriew	8.6	-6	-5.1
Caersws	21.3	34	12.1
Carno	30.9	-15	-2.5
Churchstoke	4.5	15	33.3
Dolforwyn	12.3	125	73.1
Kerry	7.7	28	28.3
Llandinam	12.5	10	10.3
Llangurig	22.3	22	17.1
Llanidloes	17.8	57	13.8
Newtown	13.4	374	36.2
Trefeglwys	35.1	-29	-5.9
Study area	16.1	615	17.7

Source: 1991 Census

Although the overall level of Welsh usage within the Newtown area was low in 1991, the number of Welsh speakers increased by around 18% during the 1980s, with eight out of eleven wards recording such rises - ranging from 10% in Llandinam to 73% in Dolforwyn and Mochdre.

The levels of in-movement described above have resulted in profound changes in the age structure of the study area. Table 4.32 highlights that between 1981-91, population increases were recorded across all age ranges, with the exception of persons aged 5-14 years. The highest level of growth was witnessed amongst the 25-44 years group (18%), and significant rises were also reported amongst more elderly groups - with the number of 45-59 year olds rising by 14%, and persons aged 60 years and over by 17%. Increases in 'young, family type' households across the 1980s were less pronounced than those recorded within the Aberystwyth area - the numbers of 25-44 and under 15 year olds increasing by 18% and 9% respectively. Across the Newtown study area, ten wards showed increases in such 'young family type' households in the 1981-91 period. The proportion of elderly persons - 60 years and over - rose in nine of the eleven wards, with highest growth rates recorded in the eastern wards of Dolforwyn and Mochdre (25%, Kerry (22%) and Newtown (27%).

Table 4.32: The changing age structure 1981-91 - the Newtown study area (percentages)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
Berriew	9.9	-29.5	-18.4	-3.7	-2.4	2.6
Caersws	19.7	-24.5	-2.1	13.1	6.1	19.4
Carno	28.0	-7.1	-7.8	26.1	14.2	15.5
Churchstoke	13.7	-24.5	9.3	17.2	42.9	-17.1
Dolforwyn	16.8	3.4	32.2	33.0	39.4	25.4
Kerry	7.1	-16.7	-4.6	7.4	12.4	22.1
Llandinam	-5.9	-15.0	-24.7	10.2	-9.9	2.8
Llangurig	2.6	-12.6	-52.4	4.5	40.4	19.9
Llanidloes	45.8	-21.1	-5.8	19.1	4.4	9.2
Newtown	12.7	-3.1	36.7	22.0	13.9	26.6
Trefeglwys	27.1	2.3	-19.4	15.5	13.7	-13.4
Study area	9.2	-9.4	13.2	18.4	14.4	16.6

Source: 1991 Census

By 1991, the age structure of the Newtown study area was almost identical to that reported for rural Wales as a whole. The main difference between the two structures was that the Newtown area contained higher proportions of younger adults (aged 25-44) and marginally lower levels of elderly residents (aged 60 years and over). The geography of the area's age structure is presented in Table 4.33. It can be seen that 'young family type' households were most prominent in the wards of Newtown, Trefeglwys, Kerry and Carno. Newtown also contained by far the greatest proportion of persons aged 15-24 years (19%). Elderly residents (aged 60 years and over) constituted more than one-quarter of the population in three wards - Llanidloes (30%) and Llangurig (26%) in the western region, and Berriew (27%) in the east.

Table 4.33: Age structure 1991 - the Newtown study area (percentages)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
Berriew	5.9	10.4	12.3	25.6	19.0	26.9
Caersws	5.8	10.7	12.5	29.8	16.6	24.6
Carno	6.9	12.6	11.5	28.9	18.5	21.7
Churchstoke	4.2	10.4	13.2	26.4	21.0	24.7
Dolforwyn	5.8	13.5	13.6	28.7	19.7	18.8
Kerry	6.4	11.7	11.2	28.9	18.1	23.7
Llandinam	5.7	12.7	13.0	27.9	19.2	21.5
Llangurig	6.3	12.0	6.2	25.6	24.2	25.8
Llanidloes	5.5	9.4	11.6	25.2	24.2	29.7
Newtown	7.3	12.9	19.1	28.6	14.5	17.7
Trefeglwys	6.7	13.5	11.0	29.3	19.4	20.0
Study area	6.1	12.2	15.0	28.2	17.2	21.3

Source: 1991 Census

4.42 Employment change

The 1980s was a decade of profound economic growth for the Newtown study area. Between 1981-91, the number of persons in employment increased by almost one-fifth, considerably higher than the mean growth rate of 11% recorded for rural Wales. Within the study area, ten out of the eleven wards witnessed rises in the resident workforce across the 1980s. The components of employment growth have in many ways mirrored those reported for rural Wales and the Aberystwyth area. In terms of a gender breakdown, employment growth in the 1980s was most pronounced amongst women workers (41% compared to 8% amongst men). Increases in the number of women in employment were recorded in each ward, with growth rates in excess of 50% witnessed in the wards of Dolforwyn and Mochdre (89%), Churchstoke (72%) and Llangurig (58%). Lowest growth rates were recorded in the wards of Llanidloes (10%) and Berriew (11%).

Increases in the number of men in employment were limited to eight wards, with growth levels ranging from 1% in Trefeglwys to 29% in Dolforwyn. The remaining three wards - Berriew, Kerry and Llandinam - each witnessed a reduction in their resident male

workforce. Interestingly, the three wards that showed the greatest increases in male employment were synonymous with those wards that recorded highest female growth rates - Churchstoke, Dolforwyn and Mochdre, and Llangurig.

Table 4.34: Percentage change in persons in employment 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	men	women
Berriew	-10.1	11.2
Caersws	7.7	31.3
Carno	8.4	34.1
Churchstoke	18.1	72.3
Dolforwyn	29.4	88.7
Kerry	-1.1	47.4
Llandinam	-7.4	33.3
Llangurig	14.0	57.7
Llanidloes	7.1	10.1
Newtown	8.8	41.8
Trefeglwys	1.1	37.7
Study area	7.8	40.5

Source: 1991 Census

Although male employment remained dominated by full-time employees (60%), the number of such workers fell marginally during the 1980s (see Table 4.35). The greatest increase in male employment was recorded amongst part-time workers - a rise of 80%, although in 1991, such persons accounted for only 3% of the total male workforce. Male self-employment increased by rates of 23% (with employees) and 19% (for those without employees), so that , in 1991, self-employment accounted for around 36% of all working men.

The number of women workers showed increases across each employment type - albeit of varying intensity, with highest levels of growth recorded amongst women in self-employment - an increase of roughly 65% between 1981-91. Part-time female workers also showed a considerable increase in this period (50%), with the number of full-time employees rising by around 30%. By 1991, approximately one-third of all women in employment were engaged in part-time work - ten times the proportion of male part-time workers. A majority of working women, however, remained in full-time employment, with the remaining 13% engaged in self-employment within the study area. As a result of

this considerable gender restructuring within the workplace, in 1991 women constituted 42% of the formal labour market compared to a level of 36% recorded ten years earlier.

Table 4.35: The changing structure of employment 1981-91 - the Newtown study area (employees)- percentages

	<u>men</u>		<u>women</u>	
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1981-91</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1981-91</u>
employees - full-time	60.3	-0.5	53.2	29.5
employees - part-time	3.4	86.3	34.1	52.2
self-employed with employees	10.0	23.2	4.2	65.3
self-employed without employees	26.2	18.5	8.6	65.5
<i>%age of total workforce</i>	<i>58.1</i>		<i>41.9</i>	

Source: 1991 Census

Employment sectors

Employment growth in the Newtown area during the 1980s was dominated by the service sector, with the number of employees in this sector increasing by almost 40% between 1981-89 (Censuses of Employment, 1981, 1989) (see Table 4.36). Such a growth rate was almost double that recorded in the Aberystwyth study area (21%). The Newtown area also witnessed an increase of more than one-third in employees engaged in the manufacturing sector. The 'energy and water' sector witnessed a slight reduction in employees, whilst marginal changes were recorded within the 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' and construction sectors across the 1980s.

Table 4.36: The changing employment structure of the Newtown study area - 1981-89 (employees)

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1981-89</u>	
			<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	800	800	0	0.0
Energy and water supply	100	0	-100	-100.0
Manufacturing industries	2 500	3 300	800	32.0
Construction	300	300	0	-100.0
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	1 100	1 900	800	72.7
Transport, communication, banking and finance	600	900	300	50.0
Public administration and defence	600	600	0	0.0
Other service industries	1 500	1 900	400	26.7
<i>All services</i>	<i>3 800</i>	<i>5 300</i>	<i>1 500</i>	<i>39.5</i>

Source: NOMIS

In 1989, around 55% of employees were engaged in services - a much lower rate than the mean for rural Wales and the Aberystwyth study area (83%) - with 'distribution, hotels and catering' (20%) and 'other services' (20%) appearing particularly important. The manufacturing sector, although less dominant than services, was particularly prominent in the Newtown area - accounting for 34% of all employees in the study area compared with 22% of employees in Powys, and only 4% of such workers in the Aberystwyth area. A further 8% of employees were engaged in 'agriculture, forestry and fishing', whilst the construction sector accounted for roughly 3% of all employees in the study area (Table 4.37).

Table 4.37: Employment structure 1989 - Newtown study area (employees) – percentages

Agriculture, forestry and fishing	8.3
Energy and water supply	0.0
Manufacturing industries	34.4
Construction	3.1
Distribution, hotels, catering, repairs	19.8
Transport, communication, banking and finance	9.4
Public administration and defence	6.3
Other service industries	19.8
<i>All services</i>	<i>55.3</i>

Source: NOMIS

As reported in the Aberystwyth area, the service sector appeared most dominant amongst part-time and female employment - accounting for 88% of part-time female employees. The manufacturing sector played an important part in full-time employment, with 40% of full-time men and 43% of full-time women employees engaged in this sector. Farming, forestry and fishing represented the only other significant employment sector - accounting for half of all part-time male employees and roughly 13% of full-time men in 1989.

Vacancies

Table 4.38 highlights the most frequently advertised vacancies in the Newtown study area in 1986 and 1991. In each year, five occupational groups dominated new employment opportunities - accounting for 45% of notified vacancies in 1986 and 60% in 1991: clerical and machine operators; cleaning and personal services; assembling, packaging and inspecting; selling-distribution; and catering. Such a pattern of vacancies is remarkably similar to that recorded in the Aberystwyth study area, although a broader range of employment opportunities were available in the Newtown area. The steepest rises in reported vacancies in the 1986-91 period were recorded in 'assembling, packaging and inspecting' (107 jobs); 'transport operators' (36 jobs); and 'clerical and machine operators' (25 jobs).

Table 4.38: Notified vacancies (over 20) to the Newtown job centre by occupational groups - 1986 and 1991

1986	no.	%age	1991	no.	%age
clerical & machine operators	161	14.1	clerical & machine operators	186	17.6
cleaning & personal services	122	10.7	assembling/packaging/ inspecting	184	17.4
selling - distribution	80	7.0	cleaning & personal services	126	11.9
assembling/packaging/ inspecting	77	6.7	selling - distribution	98	9.3
catering	70	6.1	catering	79	7.5
making/repairing - textiles/cloth	60	5.2	transport operators - others	74	7.0
managerial	41	3.6	managerial	56	5.3
farming & fishing	39	3.4	welding/fabrication	22	2.1
making/repairing - others	39	3.4	selling - others	21	2.0
transport operators - others	38	3.3	construction - unskilled	21	2.0
typing & secretarial	32	2.8	total	1 056	
selling - others	27	2.4			
welding/fabrication	25	2.2			
nursing	24	2.1			
transport operators-HGV/PSV	22	1.9			
total	1 144				

Source: Employment Service

Examples of the types of employment advertised in the area are provided below - which shows a selection of vacancies advertised in the Newtown Job Centre in February 1991:

manager of screen printing factory	health insurance salesperson
experienced machine toll operator	sewing machinist
security alarms sales representative	financial services representative
electrical motor rewind person	insurance salesperson
clerk / typist	agricultural fitter
library assistant	checkout operator
cook / chef - restaurant	waiter
factory general assistant	office cleaner
catalogue salesperson	factory production operator
assembler - electronics factory	

Unemployment

Throughout the 1980s, unemployment levels in the Newtown study area were consistently amongst the lowest in Wales. In January 1992, 774 persons were registered 'unemployed and receiving benefit' - 5.9% of the total workforce, with the male unemployment rate more than double that recorded amongst women (7.3% compared to 3.7%). Across the 1980s, the mean level of unemployment fell from 9.6% of the workforce in January 1985 to 2.9% in July 1990, and then doubled to 5.9% in January 1992 (Table 4.39).

Table 4.39: Unemployment levels 1985-91 in the Newtown study area

<i>percentage of the workforce unemployed</i>			
Jan 1984	9.4	Jan 1988	6.6
Jul 1984	9.0	Jul 1988	5.8
Jan 1985	9.6	Jan 1989	4.1
Jul 1985	8.8	Jul 1989	2.7
Jan 1986	8.8	Jan 1990	3.2
Jul 1986	8.1	Jul 1990	2.9
Jan 1987	8.6	Jan 1991	4.9
Jul 1987	7.1	Jul 1991	5.4
		Jan 1992	5.9

Source: Employment Service

A majority of persons unemployed were aged between 20-39 years - a marginally lower proportion than recorded in the Aberystwyth study area. A greater number of more elderly claimants existed in the Newtown area (16.3% were aged over 44 years compared to 12.9% in Aberystwyth), as well as a higher proportion of young unemployed persons (10.4% were aged under 20 years compared to 6.4% in the Aberystwyth area). In terms of a gender breakdown of such figures, Table 4.40 shows that more than twice as many women as men aged under 20 years were officially unemployed.

Almost two-thirds of persons unemployed had been 'out of work' for less than six months, with a higher proportion of women (71%) than men (60%) in this position. Long-term unemployment (longer than two years) accounted for 5% of all unemployed persons, with a higher proportion of men being 'out of work' for more than 48 months than women (6.2% compared with 2.1% of unemployed women).

Table 4.40: The characteristics of unemployment in the Newtown study area - Jan. 1992 (percentages)

<u>unemployment by age</u>				<u>unemployment by duration</u>			
	all	male	female		all	male	female
17 - 19	10.4	8.3	16.9	under 6 months	62.9	60.4	70.5
20 - 29	36.5	37.5	33.7	6 - 12 months	18.7	19.0	17.9
30 - 39	20.7	20.9	20.5	1 - 2 years	13.2	14.4	9.5
40 - 49	16.0	16.4	14.7	over 2 years	5.1	6.2	2.1
50 - 59	14.6	14.7	14.2				
60+	1.7	2.2	0.0				

Source: Employment Service

4.43 Housing

Alongside such population change, social and cultural recomposition and economic restructuring has been a restructuring of housing provision within the Newtown study area. Again, this final section considers the same three aspects of the local housing market covered in the previous analysis of the Aberystwyth study area.

Tenure

In 1991, the housing market in the Newtown area, like that of rural Wales as a whole, was dominated by private ownership. This said, the level of owner-occupation (64%) was amongst the lowest within the rural region and considerable below the rural Wales average of 70% private ownership. Public sector housing provision remained relatively high in the area, due partly to the housebuilding activities of the DBRW in Newtown during the 1970s - accounting for more than one-fifth of all households (compared to roughly 15% in rural Wales).

During the 1980s, the number of households 'owning' their home increased by around 53%, or 2 270 households. In contrast, and in common with many areas of Britain, the provision of social housing in the Newtown area fell dramatically during this period. Between 1981-91, the number of households renting from the local authority or Development Board fell by around 21% - a loss of 585 households. New social housing, provided mainly by housing associations, has been able to replace only a small part of this public sector loss, providing 164 units of accommodation between 1981-91, and accounting for just 2.2% of all households in 1991.

The situation regarding private rental housing mirrored that reported in the Aberystwyth area. In short, the number of households living in furnished private rented accommodation increased by 82% through the 1980s, whilst those in unfurnished properties fell by roughly 20%. By 1991, furnished and unfurnished private rented

housing accounted for 2% and 7% respectively of all households in the area. The proportion of households living in accommodation tied to employment fell from around 4% in 1981 to 3% of all households in 1991.

Table 4.41: Household tenure 1981 and 1991 - the Newtown study area

	<u>1981</u>		<u>1991</u>		<u>Rural Wales</u>
	<u>no.</u>	<u>%age</u>	<u>no.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>mean 1991</u>
owner-occupation	4 160	50.1	6 430	63.9	70.2
local authority or new town rented	2 823	34.0	2 238	22.2	18.0
housing association rented	58	0.7	222	2.2	1.7
private rented - furnished	108	1.3	197	2.0	3.6
private rented - unfurnished	844	10.2	679	6.7	5.3
private rented - with job or business	308	3.7	295	2.9	2.7

Source: 1991 Census

The geography of housing tenure

Owner-occupation - in ten of the eleven wards in the Newtown area, owner-occupation accounted for more than 60% of all households (see Table 4.42). Indeed, in excess of 80% of households were property 'owners' in the wards of Llangurig and Dolforwyn and Mochdre, with a further four wards recording ownership rates of over 70%. Owner-occupation was least prominent in the ward of Newtown - accounting for roughly half of total households. Across the 1980s, five wards recorded an increase in the number of owner-occupiers in excess of 50% - Churchstoke (54%); Dolforwyn and Mochdre (63%); Newtown (84%); Llanidloes (62%); and Llangurig (51%). Lowest growth rates were witnessed in the wards of Trefeglwys (19%) and Berriew (21%).



Table 4.42: Percentage of owner-occupied households 1991 and percentage change 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	1991	1981-91
Berriew	68.3	21.3
Caersws	69.8	45.1
Carno	76.6	43.0
Churchstoke	69.8	54.1
Dolforwyn	82.8	62.6
Kerry	75.5	32.0
Llandinam	70.5	32.0
Llangurig	81.1	50.7
Llanidloes	61.6	61.8
Newtown	50.5	83.5
Trefeglwys	74.8	18.5
Study area	63.9	54.6

Source: 1991 Census

Local authority and new town rentals - highest levels of public sector tenants existed in the two main towns within the area - Newtown and Llanidloes. More than one-third of households in Newtown resided in such housing, whilst in Llanidloes public sector housing accounted for slightly less than one-quarter of all households (Table 4.43). Overall, only two other wards recorded rates of public sector households in excess of 10% in 1991 - Churchstoke (12%) and Caersws (19%), with four of the remaining seven wards containing less than 5% of households residing in local authority or DBRW accommodation.

In terms of changing levels of provision, all wards recorded losses in public sector housing provision across the 1980s, with the wards of Dolforwyn and Mochdre, Llandinam and Llangurig witnessing reductions of over 50%. The lowest fall in public sector provision took place in Newtown - where the number of such households declined by around 12%.

Table 4.43: Percentage of households renting from the local authority or new town 1991 and percentage change 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	1991	1981-91
Berriew	9.4	-41.3
Caersws	18.6	-28.2
Carno	9.4	-33.0
Churchstoke	11.8	-25.0
Dolforwyn	4.7	-52.4
Kerry	7.7	-45.6
Llandinam	2.5	-63.6
Llangurig	1.9	-73.7
Llanidloes	24.0	-30.2
Newtown	37.4	-12.4
Trefeglwys	1.8	-35.7
Study area	22.2	-20.7

Source: 1991 Census

Housing association rental - more than nine out of ten households living in association properties were concentrated in two wards - Newtown (79%) and Llanidloes (13%). However, even in these two wards, housing associations accounted for only 4.2% and 2.5% of total households respectively. Only one other ward - Churchstoke - contained more than 1% of households living in association properties. Three wards recorded no association provision - Caersws, Dolforwyn and Mochdre, and Llangurig, whilst in each of the remaining five wards, the housing association sector accounted for less than five households. Increases across the 1980s were, not surprisingly, greatest in the wards in which association provision was highest - namely Newtown (75 households) and Llanidloes (29 households) (see Table 4.44).

Table 4.44: Percentage of households renting from housing associations 1991 and percentage change 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	1991	1981-91*
Berriew	0.2	0
Caersws	0.0	0
Carno	0.6	-1
Churchstoke	1.4	5
Dolforwyn	0.0	-1
Kerry	0.5	2
Llandinam	0.3	1
Llangurig	0.0	0
Llanidloes	2.5	29
Newtown	4.2	127
Trefeglwys	0.4	2
Study area	2.2	164

(282.8%)

* 1981-91 figures represent raw totals not percentages

Source: 1991 Census

Private rental - *unfurnished* private rented accommodation represented the dominant form of private rental in ten of the eleven wards in the study area - Churchstoke being the exception. Such properties accounted for more than one in ten of households in three wards - Llandinam (17%); Trefeglwys (15%) and Berriew (14%), whilst the lowest proportion of households in unfurnished rentals was recorded in Newtown (4%). All wards, with the exception of Kerry, witnessed a reduction in unfurnished private rental tenants through the 1980s - losses ranging from 4% in Carno and Rhiewcynon to 32% in the ward of Dolforwyn and Mochdre.

The number of households residing in *furnished* private rentals, by contrast, increased considerably in eight wards within the study area - from 76% in Newtown to 900% in Trefeglwys. However, even with such growth levels, furnished rentals accounted for a maximum of 3% of households - in Llangurig, with only three other wards recording rates in excess of 2% of total households.

Households living in *tied* accommodation were most prominent in the wards of Churchstoke, Kerry and Llandinam - where such housing accounted for around 7% of households, and was least important in the two urban areas - Newtown (1%) and

Llanidloes (2%). Six wards recorded increases in such tied households across the 1980s, albeit at lower levels than those recorded amongst households in furnished rentals - ranging from 10% in Carno and Rhiewcynon to 140% in Llanidloes.

Table 4.45: Percentage of private rental households 1991 and percentage change 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	furnished		unfurnished		rented with job or business	
	1991	1981-91	1991	1981-91	1991	1981-91
Berriew	1.6	-38.5	13.8	-12.7	5.2	4.0
Caersws	1.4	300.0	5.6	-15.8	4.2	50.0
Carno	1.3	350.0	8.0	-3.5	3.2	10.0
Churchstoke	0.4	-50.0	5.1	-29.7	7.3	12.1
Dolforwyn	2.8	187.5	5.3	-32.3	3.4	-3.4
Kerry	1.3	166.7	6.6	7.7	6.5	10.8
Llandinam	0.6	-75.0	17.1	-32.1	6.8	-18.5
Llangurig	3.0	300.0	9.1	-7.7	6.5	10.8
Llanidloes	0.3	116.7	7.6	-13.9	2.1	140.0
Newtown	2.2	75.5	4.1	-26.1	1.4	0.0
Trefeglwys	2.0	900.0	14.8	-17.2	4.5	-26.7
Study area	2.0	82.4	6.7	-19.5	2.9	-4.2

Source: 1991 Census

Second and holiday homes

According to the Census of Population, 243 second residences and holiday homes existed in the Newtown study area in April 1991 (4.6% of the total housing stock) - a reduction of roughly one-third on the situation ten years earlier. Highest rates of 'leisure home' ownership were recorded in the western wards of Trefeglwys (9%) and Llangurig (7%), with a further two wards - Llandinam and Churchstoke - recording ownership levels of more than 4% of total residences.

In 1991, second homes represented the dominant type of leisure home ownership in eight of the eleven wards. This said, during the 1980s, losses in both second residences and holiday homes were recorded within the study area of 42% and 7% respectively. Indeed, nine wards witnessed losses in second home provision, and only five recorded a reduction in the number of holiday homes.

Table 4.46: Percentage of second and holiday homes, 1991 and percentage change 1981-91 - the Newtown study area

	1991		1981-91	
	second homes	holiday homes	second homes	holiday homes
Berriew	0.2	1.3	-94.4	40.0
Caersws	1.1	0.8	-53.3	25.0
Carno	2.4	1.0	-48.6	60.0
Churchstoke	1.9	2.6	-72.5	36.4
Dolforwyn	1.5	1.2	-55.2	22.2
Kerry	2.3	0.1	77.8	-80.0
Llandinam	4.4	0.3	-5.9	-83.3
Llangurig	3.7	3.7	-66.7	-35.3
Llanidloes	1.1	0.6	40.0	-20.
Newtown	0.2	0.1	-33.3	-50.0
Trefeglwys	6.6	2.8	-20.8	14.3
Study area	2.3	1.3	-42.4	-7.4

Source: 1991 Census

The condition of the housing stock

Finally, the condition of the housing stock in the Newtown study area, like that of rural Wales generally, witnessed considerable improvements during the 1980s. By 1991, only 2% of households in the study area were without a bath / shower or inside WC. Highest proportions of households lacking such amenities were recorded in the wards of Llangurig (4.5% and 5.3% respectively), Kerry (3.6% and 3.3%) and Trefeglwys (3.3% and 3.5%).

Table 4.47: Percentage of households lacking basic amenities 1991 - the Newtown study area

	<u>no bath or shower</u>	<u>no inside W.C.</u>
Berriew	1.0	1.6
Caersws	1.6	0.9
Carno	2.0	1.3
Churchstoke	1.4	1.8
Dolforwyn	1.2	1.8
Kerry	3.6	3.3
Llandinam	2.2	2.2
Llangurig	4.5	5.3
Llanidloes	1.1	0.7
Newtown	0.5	0.5
Trefeglwys	3.3	3.5
Study area	2.0	2.1

Source: 1991 Census

4.5 Summary

This chapter has examined some key aspects of housing, demographic and employment change within each study area across the 1980s. In short, it has provided a context into which the following, more detailed analyses of the local housing market can be placed. However, the Chapter so far has considered processes of change affecting each area separately. The summary attempts to compare and contrast housing and socio-economic circumstances associated with each study area.

Demographic characteristics - each study area has witnessed high rates of population growth over recent years, with the Aberystwyth area recording a population increase of 9.3% between 1981-91, and a corresponding rise of 8.1% being reported within the Newtown study area. Such growth levels have resulted from positive levels of net in-movement to each area - 12% of Aberystwyth persons and one-tenth of persons in the Newtown study area had moved to their present address in the twelve months preceding the 1991 Census. A significant proportion of in-movement involved English persons, with the proportion of English-born residents increasing by 55% in the Aberystwyth area and 40% within the Newtown study area across the 1980s. Indeed, between April 1990 - April 1991, around one-fifth of in-migrants to each area had moved from areas outside of Wales (but within Great Britain). Such 'outside Wales' in-movement was dominated by younger persons, with 81.2% of Aberystwyth one-year in-movers and 71.5% of such in-movers within the Newtown study area aged under 45 years.

Although English in-movement has been at a high rate in each area, it can be suggested that the cultural impact of such in-migration has been markedly different within each area. The widespread usage of Welsh in the Aberystwyth study area (55% of residents in 1991) has resulted in cultural tensions and conflicts, as English in-movement has altered the cultural balance of many communities. Within the Newtown study area, however, the

Welsh language was less prominent (spoken by only 16% of residents), and so the linguistic impact of English in-movement has been less pronounced. Indeed, the number of Welsh speakers in the Newtown area increased by 18% across the 1980s, compared to a rise of around 1% recorded in the Aberystwyth study area.

Employment characteristics - each area witnessed dramatic rates of employment growth across the 1980s - the workforce in the Aberystwyth area increased by 15.7% and by 17.7% within the Newtown study area. Such increases were greatest amongst female workers, part-time employees, and the self-employed, with growth rates highest within service sector employment. The Aberystwyth labour market was more dominated by the service sector (82.5% of all employees) than the Newtown area (55.3%), with manufacturing playing an important part within the latter study area - accounting for 34.4% of employees in 1989. Farming related employment accounted for less than 10% of employees in each area. Levels of unemployment were relatively low within each area, with 5.5% of the Aberystwyth workforce and 5.9% of workers in the Newtown area unemployed and claiming benefit - the rate for Great Britain was 9.0%.

Housing characteristics - the housing market in each study area was dominated by owner-occupation, with a higher rate of private ownership recorded amongst Aberystwyth households (71%) than households within the Newtown study area (64%). Social rental provision in the Newtown area was almost double that recorded within the Aberystwyth study area - with 13% of households in the former area, and 24% in the latter area renting from the local authority, DBRW or housing associations. Private rental accounted for 16% of Aberystwyth households, and 15% of households within the Newtown area.

In each study area, the outcome of housing policies in the post-1979 period has been a consolidation of private ownership, a dramatic reduction in social rental housing, and a slight rejuvenation of the private rented sector, particularly furnished properties.

Finally, second and holiday homes did not appear to represent a major component of the local housing market in either area - accounting for 4.3% of the Aberystwyth housing stock and 3.6% of Newtown properties. This said, in some wards 'leisure home' ownership accounted for more than 10% of the total stock. Similarly, less than 5% of households in all wards were living in accommodation that lacked either an inside toilet or bath / shower.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PROVISION AND ALLOCATION OF SOCIAL HOUSING

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has highlighted key components of housing and socio-economic change over recent years in each case study area. It can be argued that such an examination of restructuring is an essential context for any detailed investigation the local housing market. Such local analysis is developed in the next three chapters. Chapter Five is concerned with the provision and allocation of social rental housing in each study area. It examines the ways in which 1980s national housing policies have affected the nature of social housing provision at the local level. In short it considers five key aspects of social rental housing:

- (i) the changing geography of local authority housing provision;
- (ii) the allocation of local authority housing;
- (iii) the intensity and nature of demand for local authority housing;
- (iv) the changing nature of provision of housing association accommodation;
- (v) the aims and allocation procedures of associations;

5.2 Local authorities

5.21 The geography of local authority housing provision

The previous chapter demonstrated that in both the Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas local authority housing provision in the late 1980s was concentrated in the main urban areas. Confirmation of this concentrated distribution is provided by information on stock holdings obtained from each local housing authority. In the former area, for example, 59% of council properties were located in Aberystwyth, whilst 48% of local

authority dwellings in the latter area were concentrated in Newtown. In the Newtown area, a further 23% of public housing was located in Llanidloes - the next largest settlement. Whilst such concentrations of local authority housing have been discussed widely in the rural housing literature (Phillips and Williams, 1982) it still needs to be stressed that the option of local authority tenure is limited to a few locations. In the Aberystwyth study area, 86% of all council properties were concentrated in just 7 out of 27 communities (Table 5.1). Likewise, in the Newtown area, 91% of local authority provision was located in only 7 out of 21 communities (Table 5.2). Indeed, 10 communities in each study area contained no council properties.

5.22 Council house sales

As a result of recent housing legislation, and particularly the 1980 Housing Act, each area had witnessed considerable reductions in its local authority housing stock. Information obtained from housing departments indicates that, by the late 1980s, roughly one-quarter of public sector stock in the Aberystwyth study area and almost one-third of such dwellings in the Newtown area had been sold to sitting tenants. This said, within each area there existed considerable spatial variations in the level of council house sales. In the Aberystwyth area, for example, the percentage of such properties sold ranged from zero in Devil's Bridge to 70% in Llanfarian (Table 5.1), whilst in the Newtown study area council house purchases ranged from 10% (Abermule) to 100% (Bwlchyffridd) (Table 5.2).

Although the level of sales in individual communities will be influenced partly by the number of council properties for the elderly (such housing is excluded from the Right-to-Buy legislation), it is evident from Tables 5.01 - 5.02 that several communities in each study area have witnessed dramatic reductions in local authority housing provision during the 1980s. For example, four communities in the Aberystwyth area - Blaenplwyf, Capel Bangor, Llandre and Llanfarian - witnessed losses of 50% or more during the 1980s, whilst losses of such magnitude were recorded in seven communities within the

Newtown study area - Aberhafesp, Berriew, Bwlchyffridd, Dolfor, Llandyssil, Llangurig and Trewern.

Although such high levels of public sector loss have resulted from a generally low level of provision in many communities, it remains the case that, for example, three sales in a village - Aberhafesp in the Newtown area - that originally contained only four council houses represents a significant reduction. Indeed, of those communities that had witnessed losses of more than 50%, three in the Newtown area and two in the Aberystwyth study area contained less than twenty local authority properties in the early 1980s.

Table 5.1: Local authority housing provision, sales and waiting list totals for communities in the Aberystwyth study area - 1990.

Community	original stock	total sold	remaining stock	%age sold	total on waiting list	waiting list as percentage of remaining stock
Abermagwr	19	9	10	47.4	5	50.0
Aberystwyth	1316	335	981	25.5	436	44.4
Blaenplwyf	16	7	9	56.3	2	22.2
Borth & Llandre	62	20	42	32.2	21	50.0
Bow Street	111	27	84	24.3	13	15.5
Bronant	7	3	4	42.9	3	75.0
Capel Bangor	30	16	14	53.3	6	42.9
Capel Dewi	15	3	12	20.0	0	0.0
Clarach	9	4	5	44.4	2	40.0
Commings Coch	85	14	71	16.5	11	15.5
Cross Inn	13	4	9	30.8	3	33.3
Devil's Bridge	8	0	8	0.0	4	50.0
Llanarth	61	9	52	14.8	12	23.1
Llanbadarn	81	14	67	17.3	36	53.7
Llanfarian	30	21	9	70.0	7	77.8
Llanilar	40	11	29	27.5	14	48.3
Llanon	83	24	59	28.9	18	30.5
Llanrhystud	21	7	14	33.3	2	14.3
Penrhyncoch	31	11	20	35.5	5	25.0
Ponterwyd	29	3	26	10.3	4	15.4
Pontrhydfendigaid	65	16	49	24.6	4	8.2
Pontrhydygroes	11	4	7	36.4	1	14.3
Talybont	65	16	49	15.4	13	23.6
Tre-ddol & Taliesin	11	1	10	9.1	4	40.0
Ysbyty Ystwyth	10	2	8	20.0	2	44.4
Aberystwyth area	2229	575	1654	25.8	628	38.0

Source: Ceredigion District Council Housing Department

Table 5.2: Local authority housing provision, sales and waiting list totals for communities in the Newtown study area - 1990.

Community	original stock	total sold	remaining stock	%age sold	total on waiting list	waiting list as percentage of remaining stock
Aberhafesp	4	3	1	75.0	1	100.0
Abermule	8	3	5	37.5	9	180.0
Adfa	10	4	6	40.0	0	0.0
Berriew	70	35	35	50.0	21	60.0
Bettws	28	8	20	28.6	1	5.0
Bwlchyffridd	4	4	0	100.0	7	no stock
Caersws	138	43	95	31.2	27	28.4
Carno	56	18	38	32.1	8	21.1
Churchstoke	53	15	38	28.3	33	86.8
Clatter	14	6	8	42.9	1	12.5
Dolfor	4	2	2	50.0	1	50.0
Kerry	69	32	37	46.4	16	43.2
Llandinam	20	9	11	45.0	8	72.7
Llandyssil	20	12	8	60.0	3	37.5
Llangurig	18	13	5	72.2	3	60.0
Llanidloes	447	162	285	36.2	113	39.6
Manafon	10	3	7	30.0	7	100.0
Newtown	755	163	592	21.6	291	49.2
Trefeglwys	8	3	5	37.5	0	0.0
Tregynon	17	4	13	23.5	6	46.2
Trewern	51	26	25	51.0	5	20.0
Newtown area	1804	568	1236	31.5	561	45.4

Source: Montgomeryshire District Council Housing Department

The section so far has failed to consider the types of properties purchased by local authority tenants. Whilst such information was not supplied by either local authority, it is possible to make several general comments about the characteristics of purchased council houses. Firstly, outlying communities have witnessed highest levels of public sector sales, with only 26% and 22% of total sales recorded in the Aberystwyth and Newtown urban areas respectively. These figures would seem to confirm one of the main findings from an earlier study by Gillon (1981), namely that council house sales were concentrated in outlying villages. In addition, Gillon highlighted that sales generally involved better quality, semi-detached properties with gardens, with such properties purchased by higher income tenants. Such a process, it was suggested was leading to a situation whereby the remainder of tenants were becoming increasingly marginalised in a deteriorating residual public sector housing stock.

An indication of the types of properties purchased by sitting tenants can be gleaned from figures obtained from the Development Board for Rural Wales. As mentioned earlier, the DBRW constructed a variety of affordable rental dwellings in the 1970s as part of its objective to double the population total of Newtown. By the early 1990s, DBRW tenants had been given the opportunity to purchase their dwellings. A breakdown of the types of properties sold under the scheme is provided in Table 5.3. In proportional terms, sales have been greatest amongst houses, and particularly amongst three- and four-bedroom houses. Only 2% of total sales have involved flats.

Table 5.3: D.B.R.W. properties sold - June 1990.

	%age of total stock	%age of total sales
flats	14.4	2.0
bungalows	1.7	0.4
maisonettes	0.9	0.0
2 bedroom houses	15.7	8.1
3 bedroom houses	60.4	81.0
4 bedroom houses	1.4	8.5
5 bedroom houses	0.5	0.0

Source: DBRW (personal correspondence)

5.23 The allocation of local authority housing

Ceredigion District Council

The general allocation procedure of local authority housing in Ceredigion involved persons filling in an application form, renewable on an annual basis. Applicants were listed by the Council in points order in the areas of their stated preference, with separate lists maintained for two- and three-bedroom and retirement accommodation. Council housing is, in theory, available to all persons aged 18 years and over living in Ceredigion and in need of rehousing, with the following persons also accepted on the waiting list, even though they may not reside within the district:

- (a) applicants working in Ceredigion;

- (b) applicants with close family ties within the district;
- (c) applicants who wish to be near to close relatives, eg. parents or children, due to ill health;
- (d) applications from couples intending to be married will be accepted upto six months prior to the date of marriage.

The local authority also nominates applicants to local housing associations for vacancies as they arise.

Persons living outside Ceredigion are still able to register for local authority housing under two national housing schemes:

- (a) *National Mobility Scheme*, where a person moving to Ceredigion for social, medical, or employment reasons, can be nominated by the existing local authority for accommodation in Ceredigion;
- (b) *Tenants Exchange Scheme*, involving a national computerised register of existing council tenants seeking an exchange to another area.

Several groups are treated outside of the general points system. Firstly, the Housing Committee has the power to allocate accommodation for key workers unable to find suitable accommodation. Secondly, people living in slum clearance areas and homeless persons with priority need under the Homeless Persons Act (1977) are also rehoused outside the points system. Thirdly, persons in tied accommodation registered on the list are automatically awarded five extra points if they were forced to leave their dwelling on retirement. Finally, medical priority for council accommodation can also be considered outside the points system.

Applicants are asked to express a first, second and third preference for particular areas, with general applicants having to wait twelve months before inclusion on the active waiting list. If offers of housing are refused by the applicant and the Council consider the reason(s) is/are unreasonable, then no further offers will be made for a period of twelve months. However, all applicants have the right to appeal against any decisions taken by the housing authority.

Council housing is allocated to applicants on the waiting list in points order. When a vacancy arises in a particular community, the lettings officer scrutinises the waiting and transfer lists to ensure that all suitable candidates with high priority are considered in accordance with the points scheme - taking into consideration the property location, size and other characteristics. The lettings officer agrees allocations in consultation with elected members for the relevant wards.

Montgomery District Council

Montgomeryshire also operates a points based allocation procedure, with the Council accepting applications from persons aged 16 years or over who satisfy at least one of the following criteria:

- (i) living in Montgomeryshire;
- (ii) in full-time employment in the district;
- (iii) a member of HM forces born in Montgomeryshire;
- (iv) living outside Montgomeryshire, but having lived for a continuous period of at least three years in the district;
- (v) living outside the district, but accepted by the Council under the National Mobility Scheme;
- (vi) any other person to whom the Council has a statutory duty to rehouse or to consider rehousing.

However, applicants accepted on the waiting list under grounds (a) and (b) above, are not considered for rehousing until they have lived or worked in Montgomeryshire for at least six months.

Applicants over the state retirement age, or whose partners are over retirement age, together with physically disabled persons needing ground floor accommodation, are registered on the elderly persons (EP) waiting list. Other applicants are placed on the general purpose (GP) waiting list, although families are given preferential consideration for all three- and four-bedroom houses. Again certain applications are also nominated for local housing association accommodation.

Tenancies are allocated by the Area Lettings Sub-Committee (ALSC), composed of all elected members for the area within which the vacancy arose. Allocations are normally made to the highest pointed applicant suitable for the accommodation available. However, the ALSC has discretion to select any applicant from the ten highest pointed applicants in the four main settlements in the district - Llanidloes, Machynlleth, Newtown and Welshpool - and the five highest pointed applicants elsewhere who they consider to be in the greatest need of housing. The ALSC also uses '*their judgement*' to determine priority amongst applicants with equal points.

Persons homeless, or threatened with homelessness, under the Homeless Persons Act (1977), or as defined by the Rent Agriculture Act, or where the Council is under a duty to ensure that accommodation is available to persons under the provisions of Part III of the Housing Act (1985) are given priority, regardless of their points score, and considered by the ALSC alongside the ten highly pointed applicants. The ALSC also considers inward and outward applications under the National Mobility Scheme, whereby firms can nominate persons as key workers, with such applications considered outside the points system.

Montgomeryshire applicants are allowed to specify three different areas for accommodation. They can also make a deferred application and then switch to the active register at a later date. However, if an applicant refuses more than one offer of accommodation, the application is deferred for six months, unless exceptional circumstances prevail. Again, all applications are renewed on an annual basis.

5.24 The points system

Figure 5.1 provides a synopsis of the points system operating within Ceredigion and Montgomeryshire, based on information supplied by each housing department. It is immediately apparent from Figure 5.1 that the pointing procedure for Montgomeryshire

is more detailed and complex - both in terms of the number of categories and the amount of points that could be accumulated by an applicant. However, it is possible to identify some common features of each department's pointing system. In short, each department awarded a series of points - albeit of varying magnitude - to five main factors:

- (i) overcrowding - maximum of 16 points in Ceredigion and a realistic maximum of 10 points in Montgomeryshire;
- (ii) lacking or sharing basic facilities - maximum of 10 points in Ceredigion and 37 points in Montgomeryshire;
- (iii) number of children in the household - 3 points per child in Ceredigion; included within overcrowding and 'children in flats above ground level' criteria in Montgomeryshire;
- (iv) local connection / length of time on the waiting list - a much greater weighting is given to these factors in Montgomeryshire, where applicants could accrue up to 25 points. Applicants in Ceredigion could gain a maximum of 10 points for their period on the waiting list, and a further 5 points for a local employment connection;
- (v) housing committee's discretionary power to award additional points in 'particularly deserving cases'. In Ceredigion, for example, up to 5 points could be allocated for this purpose, and Montgomeryshire applicants could be awarded a maximum of 10 points.

It can be suggested that such a points system discriminates against young single people and childless couples, particularly those living in accommodation containing basic facilities but paying relatively high rentals. With regard to this latter factor, it is clear that neither system caters for 'affordability', that is the price of private sector housing relative to income levels in the local area. This said, the Montgomeryshire system partly addresses this issue by awarding a maximum of 3 points to applicants on incomes of less than £8000 per annum.

Such an allocation procedure caters only for those households in severest housing need in respect to physical structure, availability of key services and presence of young children. However, even in situations where households are normatively classified as 'in housing need' and placed at the top of the waiting list there is no guarantee of a council property as increasing numbers of households are being rehoused outside the points system (particularly cases of accepted homelessness).

In short, very little attention is given to the state of the local private housing market and the probability of securing suitable alternative affordable accommodation. It seems clear that with the stock of local authority housing declining, a large number of households requiring such housing who satisfy the allocation criteria will be denied the opportunity of tenure, particularly in some outlying villages where the level of council house sales has been greatest.

Figure 5.1: The points system in Ceredigion and Montgomeryshire

Ceredigion			Montgomeryshire
<u>Overcrowding on bedroom standard</u>			
Occupants	Bedroom		(i) for every bedroom the family's present accommodation falls short of the adopted standard; 5
	1	2	3
applicant +1	1	nil	nil
applicant +2	2	1	nil
applicant +3	3	2	1
applicant +4	4	3	2
applicant +5	5	4	3
applicant +6	6	5	4
<i>total 6 points</i>			and so on
-----			<i>total 5 + 6/8/10, etc. depending on children</i>
Statutory overcrowding 10 points			-----
<u>Shared facilities</u>			
(i)	shared living room & kitchen; 2		(i) all facilities shared with another household; 10
(ii)	shared kitchen only; 1		(ii) shared kitchen; 2
(iii)	shared W.C.; 1		(iii) shared living room; 2
(iv)	shared bathroom; 1		(iv) shared bathroom or WC; 2
<i>total 5 points</i>			<i>total 10 points</i>
-----			-----
<u>Inadequate or lacking facilities</u>			
(i)	kitchen lacking adequate facilities for preparation and cooking food; 1		(i) WC; 5
(ii)	no cold water in house; 1		(ii) inside WC, bath/shower, kitchen, piped water supply, proper drainage system (mains drainage/sceptic tank); 3 each
(iii)	no WC; 1		(iii) sink/wash basin, hot water supply; 1 each
(iv)	no bath or shower; 1		(iv) serious disrepair; 5
(v)	no hot water; 1		

total 5 points

Applicants occupying house in bad state of disrepair; inadequate ventilation and natural lighting; dampness; and disrepair
total 5 points

For each unmarried child living with applicant or a dependant relative living with applicant; *3 points each*

Period on waiting list - one point allocated for each year on the list
total 10 points

Local employment - including applicants who due to social or medical circumstances are unable to work
total 5 points

Families who due to social conditions are prevented from living as a family unit
total 5 points

Discretionary power - to be awarded by the committee in particular deserving cases
total 5 points

total 27 points

Local connections

(i)a applicants now living within district; 5

(i)b for each full year of residence in last 20 years; 1 (max. 15)

(ii) community connection - awarded for one community where applicant can show a close local connection (eg. community of birth, employment, long established residence, close family connections); 5

(iii) applicants now living outside the district - for each period of 3 years in the district; 2 (max. 10)

(iv) applicants now living outside the district, who are employed full-time in the district, and have been so employed for a continuous period of at least one years - for each year of continuous employment; 2 (max. 10)

(v) all service personnel born in the district or having lived for the majority of their life (prior to joining the forces) in the district; 10

total 25 points

Applicants in caravans - pointed by bedroom standard but to receive for each person in excess of number of berths; *2 points*

Children under 14 in flats or entirely above ground level; *3 points*

Family separation - family unable to live together due to lack of adequate housing; *10 points*

Tied tenancies - if reasonable grounds exist for terminating employment (eg. retirement, medical); *10 points*

Financial circumstances

in receipt of Income Support, Family Credit or gross income of under £8 000 pa; 3

gross income above £8 000 but less than £9 000; 2

gross income above £9 000 but less than £10 000; 1
total 3 points

Leaving care

applicants about to leave hospital or long-term care have no suitable accommodation available; *10 points*

Medical points

where present accommodation is not helping applicant's medical condition; *up to 10 points*

Discretionary points

to be awarded by the Area Lettings Sub-Committee; *up to 10 points*

Source: Ceredigion District Council and Montgomeryshire District Council housing departments

5.25 The changing demand for local authority housing

Alongside reductions in the provision of council housing in the two study areas, has been a rise in the number of households on the waiting lists. The estimated size of the Ceredigion list increased from about 1 100 in 1986 to roughly 2 000 households in 1990. Similarly, the number of households registered on the Montgomeryshire list rose from roughly 900 to 1 000 in the same period (Tai Cymru, 1990b, Table 5.01). Such increases were confirmed by a survey of housing authority managers across rural Wales conducted in 1990. The survey revealed that 53% of responding managers had witnessed increases of more than 50% in numbers applying for social housing between 1985-90, with a further 29% reporting a rise of up to 50% in applicants. Highest levels of increase were recorded amongst one-parent families (71% had noticed an increase in applicants in excess of 50%); single persons below pensionable age (53%), homeless families (44%); general families (41%); and young couples without children (41%) (Tai Cymru, 1990b, Table 6.02).

A further indicator of changing demands for local authority housing is provided by published statistics on homelessness. In Ceredigion, the number of households accepted as homeless by the housing authority increased from 47 to 150 - over 250% - between 1985-91 (district figures were first provided in 1985), whilst accepted homeless cases in Montgomeryshire rose by more than 600% - from 16 cases in 1985 to 121 in 1991. Clearly, as stated in Chapter Three, alongside such households accepted as homeless must be added those persons experiencing housing difficulties who do not satisfy the strict homelessness acceptance criteria - particularly young single persons and couples without children.

Whilst it can be suggested that many people recognise their slim chances of gaining a council house tenancy and so do not register themselves for such dwellings, the waiting list nevertheless remains an important indicator of the demand for local authority housing at the local level. A detailed breakdown of the waiting list in January 1990 for

Ceredigion District Council is presented below. The section is intended to provide an indication of the characteristics of households on the list.

Nearly 40% of applicants on the Ceredigion waiting list in January 1990 were elderly persons (pensionable age and over), with elderly single persons in particular accounting for around one-quarter of all applicants. The remaining (non-elderly) applicants on the list can be sub-divided into three main groups: families - making up about 32% of applicants, and dominated by households containing 1-3 children; couples - comprising roughly 13% of total applicants; and single persons - accounting for the final 12% of persons on the list.

Table 5.4: Applicants on Ceredigion District Council waiting list - January 1990

	no.	%age
Family with 1 child	215	16.5
Family with 2-3 children	184	14.1
Family with 4 or more children	17	1.3
Couple	166	12.7
Single person	162	12.4
Elderly couple	159	12.2
Elderly single person	346	26.5
engaged couple	56	4.3

Total	1305	100.0

Source: Ceredigion District Council Housing Department

In terms of the present tenure of applicants on the list, around 43% were residing in private rented accommodation, almost twice the proportion currently living in owner-occupied properties, with a further 18% of households living with friends or relatives. Of the 558 households in private rented housing, 153 (27.4%) were living in flats, 102 (18.3%) in bedsits and 64 (11.5%) were presently residing in caravans. A further breakdown of applicants presently living in private rental accommodation reveals that 27% were residing in flats, 18% were currently in bedsits, and roughly 12% of such households were living in caravans. Indeed, in overall terms, flats accounted for 21% of

total applicants, bedsits made up 9.8% and 6.8% of applicants were living in caravans (89 households).

Table 5.5: Present tenure of applicants on Ceredigion District Council waiting list - January 1990

	Flat	Rooms House	Bung- alow	Cara- van	Other	Total no.	%age
With relative	9	8	165	22	5	0	209 16.0
With friends	3	2	13	0	2	1	21 1.6
Owner occupier	20	1	210	75	13	0	319 24.4
Council tenant	26	1	29	12	2	0	70 5.3
Housing association	56	4	14	3	0	0	77 5.9
HM Armed Forces	4	0	8	0	0	1	13 1.0
Private tenant	153	102	192	44	64	3	558 42.8
Other	3	10	16	0	3	6	38 2.9
Total - no.	274	128	647	156	89	11	1305 100.0
- %age	21.0	9.8	49.6	12.0	6.8	0.8	

Source: Ceredigion District Council Housing Department

Table 5.6 provides a breakdown of the property types requested by households on the waiting list. The majority of households wished to move into one-bedroom properties (68%) - presumably a reflection of demand from elderly persons, with flats (54%) and bungalows (26%) representing the most popular types of such properties. In addition, one-fifth of applicants were waiting for two-bedroom dwellings - predominantly two-bedroom houses. Only 12% of households on the waiting list requested properties containing more than two-bedrooms.

Table 5.6: Requested property type of applicants on Ceredigion District Council waiting list - January 1990

	Number of bedrooms				Total	%age
	1	2	3	4+		
Flat	474	66	12	1	553	42.4
Bedsitter	5	0	0	0	5	0.4
House	161	176	103	37	477	36.6
Bungalow	225	25	2	0	252	19.3
Sheltered	18	0	0	0	18	1.4
Total	883	267	117	38	1305	100.0
%age	67.7	20.5	9.0	2.9	100.0	

Source: Ceredigion District Council Housing Department

5.26 The geography of local authority housing demand

A recent report (see Tai Cymru, 1990b) has suggested that the geographical demand for social housing in rural Wales is as much influenced by the likelihood of gaining such housing as it is by any real locational preference. In other words, people state a preference for locations where council housing is plentiful, and their chances of securing a tenancy are greatest. Such a suggestion is confirmed by information obtained from each housing department. In the Aberystwyth study area, for example, the Aberystwyth urban area contained 63% of total council dwellings but represented the preferred location for 75% of all applicants. Similarly, the Newtown urban area contained 48% of total local authority stock and represented the preferred location for 52% of all applicants.

Thus, it can be suggested that the waiting list may represent a constrained, or realistic preference, based on a reality of restricted access opportunities in some of the smaller villages where council stock has been reduced by sales and may total only 5-10 dwellings. Indeed, with the dwindling supply of local authority housing increasingly concentrated in the urban centres, as council house sales have been at a greater rate in the smaller settlements, it would appear that an urban relocation is fast becoming the only realistic option for the majority of applicants on the waiting list.

The final part of this section examines in more detail the likelihood of accessing local authority housing within each study area. The final column of Tables 5.1 and 5.2 (referred to in Section 5.22) highlights the size of the waiting list as a proportion of council provision in each community. Although such an index is concerned with raw totals rather than turnover rates of different types of property, it nevertheless provides a useful indication of the probability of gaining access to local authority housing in different areas. Within the table, lower numbers indicate a higher probability of gaining a tenancy, whilst a figure over 100% indicates that more households are on the list than properties exist in that particular community. Within the Aberystwyth study area, 628 households were 'waiting' for a total of 1 654 local authority properties - one household

for every 2.6 properties, with the probability of accessing council housing appearing slightly lower in the Newtown area, where 561 households were waiting for a total of 1 236 properties - one household for every 2.2 properties.

Within each area, however, considerable variations existed in these waiting list / council stock ratios. In 6 out of 25 communities within the Aberystwyth study area, the number of households on the waiting list totalled more than half the number of council properties. In Llanfarian, for example, seven households were waiting for nine local authority dwellings, whilst three applicants in the community of Bronnant were waiting for just four dwellings. A higher proportion of communities (7 out of 21) in the Newtown study area reported to have waiting lists of more than 50% of existing stock levels. Indeed, in three of these communities, households on the waiting list actually equalled or outnumbered council house provision: Aberhafesp - where one applicant was waiting for one dwelling; Manafon - where seven people were waiting for seven properties; and Abermule - nine households waiting for five council houses. In one other community within the Newtown study area - Bwlchyffridd - seven households were on the waiting list, even though no council property remained. In summary, it is clear that in these 14 communities, the probability of local people, particularly young locals, securing council housing does not appear to be particularly strong, with many being forced to move to other local or non-local areas to improve their chances of rehousing.

5.3 Housing associations

Given the importance placed on housing associations for the provision and management of social rental housing by the 1980s housing legislation, it is worthwhile to investigate their operations at the local level. This section considers two main aspects of housing association activity in rural areas: the nature of provision; and the aims and allocation procedures of local associations.

5.31 The provision of housing association accommodation

In 1991/92 housing associations in Wales provided 3 548 dwellings, an increase of 2 112 units of accommodation, or 147% on the corresponding total for 1986-87. Accompanying this increase have been changes in the nature of provision. Whereas, in 1986/87 two-thirds of self-contained association units were rehabilitation, by 1991/92 the situation had reversed, with roughly 92% of units constructed or acquired by associations. In fact, Welsh housing associations provided only 260 rehabilitation units in 1991/92.

It can be seen in Table 5.7 that these national trends have been mirrored in each of the study areas. In terms of self-contained association units, 90% of such accommodation in Ceredigion and all units in Montgomeryshire were new builds and acquisitions. In each area, self-contained units dominated new provision. Only 9 units provided in Ceredigion were 'special needs and other shared housing spaces', compared with 96 'general units'. No such special needs accommodation was provided in the district of Montgomeryshire in 1991/92.

Table 5.7: Provision of new social housing by housing associations 1991-92

District	Self-contained general units		Special needs and other shared housing bedspaces	
	new build & acquisition	rehabilitation	new build & acquisition	rehabilitation
Ceredigion	86	10	9	0
Montgomeryshire	62	0	0	0

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics, 1992

Such a pattern of new unit provision is reflected in the overall structure of housing association stock in 1992, with more than 90% self-contained provision in each area. Table 5.8 highlights the sizes of self-contained association units, with around 45% of units in Ceredigion consisting of two-bedrooms - more than double the proportion recorded in Montgomeryshire. In the latter district, three-bedroom units constituted the dominant property size of associations, accounting for around 42% of total stock and twice the level recorded in Ceredigion. One-bedroom units made up roughly one-third of the total stock in each area. The provision of bedsitter accommodation in each area was low, with only 8 units in Ceredigion and 3 units within Montgomeryshire. Slightly higher numbers of hostel accommodation were provided in Ceredigion - 30 units compared to 18 units in Montgomeryshire.

Table 5.8: Housing association stock by type of dwelling - 1992

	Ceredigion		Montgomeryshire	
	units	%age	units	%age
Bedsit	8	1.9	3	0.5
One bedroom	131	31.9	203	35.6
Two bedrooms	186	45.3	124	21.7
Three bedrooms	82	20.0	241	42.2
Four or more bedrooms	4	1.0	0	0.0
Self-contained	411	93.2	571	97.1
Hostels	30	6.8	18	2.9

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics, 1992

With regard to more specialised housing in each study area, it is apparent from Table 5.9 that associations catered for a relatively small number of groups. In Ceredigion, for example, associations have provided 6 units for persons suffering from domestic violence and 23 units for people with learning difficulties. Within the Montgomeryshire area, such provision was more limited, with housing associations providing only for persons experiencing learning difficulties (10 units). These situations contrast with national (Welsh) provision for special needs groups. Although the most catered for group - persons with learning difficulties (39%) - corresponds to the dominant provision within each case-study area, the three next most prominent groups - persons with mental illness (24%); single homeless persons (12%); and young vulnerable persons (10%) - were not catered for by associations in Ceredigion and Montgomeryshire.

Table 5.9: Housing association special needs bedspaces - 1992

	Ceredigion		Montgomeryshire		Wales	
	no.	%age	no.	%age	no.	%age
Domestic violence	6	20.7	0	0.0	132	8.0
Learning difficulties	23	79.3	10	100.0	648	39.2
Mental illness	0	0.0	0	0.0	393	23.8
Young vulnerable	0	0.0	0	0.0	166	10.0
Ex-offenders	0	0.0	0	0.0	77	4.7
Single homeless	0	0.0	0	0.0	190	11.5
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	46	2.8
<hr/>						
Total	29		10		1652	
Per 10 000 households	1.1		0.5		1.4	
<hr/>						

Source: Welsh Housing Statistics, 1992

The reason for such a discrepancy between the national situation and the case-study areas is not clear. It might relate to a lower incidence of these other special needs groups within the study areas, although homelessness levels presented earlier in this chapter would seem to discredit such an explanation. A more likely scenario might relate to differences in the objectives and allocation procedures adopted by housing associations in the study areas, with provision geared more to general and elderly needs rather than special needs groups. Housing associations in Montgomeryshire, for example, catered more for elderly and disabled persons (58%) than general needs, with such a proportion

identical to the Welsh average, whilst in the district of Ceredigion only 38% of association accommodation was geared to elderly and disabled groups.

5.32 The changing level of provision

Housing association activity increased dramatically in each study area throughout the 1980s. In Ceredigion, provision rose from 76 units in 1981 to 453 units in 1992, whilst association stock in Montgomeryshire increased from 38 to 655 units in the same period. In 1990, four associations were operating in Ceredigion - Wales and West (52 units); Mid Wales (63 units); Corlan (42 units); and Teifi (127 units), and three associations were active in the Montgomeryshire area - Mid-Wales (234 units); Corlan (30 units); and Carinthia (63 units). Of these five associations operating in the study areas, only two could be described as 'local' associations - having their head office located in the local area: Mid-Wales - with a head office in Newtown; and Teifi - with a head office in Newcastle Emlyn (SW Ceredigion) and an office in Aberystwyth. The remaining associations were mainly urban-based, with two operating from Cardiff - Wales and West and Corlan, and the other based in Wolverhampton (Carinthia).

Although housing association provision increased considerably through the 1980s, the impact of this growth on the overall tenure structure in each area had been minimal. In Ceredigion, for example, the proportion of association dwellings increased from 0.3% in 1981 to only 1.6% ten years later (Welsh Housing Statistics, 1981, 1991), whilst housing association provision in Montgomeryshire rose from 0.2% to 2.8%. Such increases - 377 units in Ceredigion and 617 units in Montgomeryshire - however have failed to bridge the gap created by local authority housing losses. In fact, for every new housing association dwelling provided in each district during the 1980s, two council houses were sold to sitting tenants. Even after allowing for increased association provision, the proportion of social rental housing (local authority and housing association dwellings)

fell by roughly 11% in Ceredigion and 16% in Montgomeryshire in the 1981-91 period (Welsh Housing Statistics, 1981, 1991).

In addition, new housing association provision also tended to be concentrated in the main settlements. In the case of the Aberystwyth study area, all association stock was located in the Aberystwyth urban area, whilst association properties in the Newtown area were concentrated in Newtown, with more limited provision in Llanidloes and Churchstoke.

5.33 The allocation of housing association accommodation

This section examines the operations of the five housing associations active in the study areas, and considers their objectives and allocation procedures. It is based on information obtained from individual association offices and so the style and volume of information presented varies between one association and another. Further information about the operations of rural housing associations in Wales is presented in Appendix B.

Wales and West - Aberystwyth study area

The association states that its main objective is to provide housing for people in need and to ensure a high public awareness of its role. Allocations are made on the basis of waiting lists with applicants awarded a points score, based on a normatively judged housing need, with access only restricted for practical reasons - for example, where demand far exceeds the supply, or where there exists an extremely low turnover of re-lets in a particular area. The association states that it discriminates against applicants in well paid employment or with a large capital sum after property sale, and advises such people about their low possibility of rehousing. If an applicant satisfies the criteria laid down by the association, s/he is visited by a member of staff and then placed on the waiting list. When a property is available for re-letting, the applicant highest on the waiting list - deemed to be in greatest housing need - is offered the tenancy. The association reviews the waiting list on an annual basis.

The Wales and West states that it takes into consideration the following set of criteria in determining an applicant's level of housing need. Unfortunately, the points score attached to each was not provided by the association, and so the following list must be viewed as merely indicative of its allocation procedure:

- (i) overcrowding;
- (ii) lack of basic facilities - for example a kitchen or bathroom;
- (iii) involuntary separation of family members;
- (iv) condition of present dwelling;
- (v) ill health -where supported by medical evidence;
- (vi) unsuitability of present accommodation;
- (vii) employment mobility;
- (viii) social mobility;
- (ix) threat of eviction;
- (x) homelessness - within the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, and also outside - for example, single persons, young married couples, divorced people without custody of their children.

Corlan - Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas

The association aims to provide rented sheltered housing for elderly persons in need of this type of accommodation, particularly those who are not financially able to make alternative arrangements.

In order to be considered for rehousing, applicants must be 60 years and over and retired; normally resident in the area, or wish to move to the area because of previous residence, or to be nearer close relatives; and be living in 'unsuitable' accommodation. Applications are generated from three sources: local publicity; referral agencies - Department of Social Security, Citizen's Advice Bureau; and from the local authority waiting list (Corlan is required to offer at least 50% nomination arrangements to the local authority in whose area the scheme exists).

Corlan takes into account four main factors when considering an applicant's request for accommodation with the association:

- (i) existing housing conditions - whether the applicant has no accommodation, is homeless or is living in inadequate housing;
- (ii) whether the applicant is capable of looking after her/himself;
- (iii) whether the applicant would benefit from company of a similar age;
- (iv) whether the applicant is financially able, capable of adapting her/his present accommodation, or able to purchase suitable alternative housing in the area.

Mid-Wales - Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas

The association states that it aims to provide housing for persons in the greatest housing need, and to complement the roles of local authorities and the Development Board for Rural Wales. Any person aged over 16 years living in the area is entitled to apply for accommodation, with applications from outside the area being accepted on grounds of health, family or employment reasons.

Applications are assessed on the basis of a points system relating to housing need. Allocations for vacancies are made by the housing manager, normally to the highest pointed applicant for that type of accommodation in the area that the vacancy arises. Mid-Wales also rehouses applicants from the local authority waiting list who have been nominated by the Council, provided that the applicant satisfies the association's criteria. In addition, applicants nominated by the DBRW are considered under a Rent Guarantee Agreement made between the Board and Corlan. The association also considers applicants who would not normally be considered by the local authority - for example, childless couples and single persons. In addition, Corlan manages several shared-ownership properties which are available for first-time buyers who are deemed unable to purchase a property outright on the open market.

Carinthia - Newtown study area

The association states that its main objective is to help those in greatest housing need who fall within the following categories:

- (i) the elderly;
- (ii) the disabled - if suitable accommodation is available;
- (iii) one parent families;
- (iv) those people in unsuitable housing - overcrowding, shared facilities;
- (v) the homeless or those likely to become homeless;
- (vi) key workers in designated development areas where sufficient suitable accommodation is not available;
- (vii) suitable nominees from the local authority's housing department and other referral agencies - normally 50% of first lettings in new schemes are made to local authority nominees.

Applicants accepted by the association for inclusion on the waiting list are awarded a points score based on the following set of criteria:

- (i) existing housing conditions - disrepair of property, overcrowding, shared facilities, security of tenure, harassment, under-occupation and health factors;
- (ii) the length of time such conditions have been endured and the applicant's ability to cope with these conditions - for example, health, age and low income;
- (ii) social factors - the possibility of family break-ups and isolation;
- (iv) ability to find alternative accommodation - whether the applicant has priority on the local authority waiting list, the applicant's ability to purchase suitable alternative housing, or secure shared ownership property.

Finally, Carinthia places an upper limit on the number of applicants taken onto waiting lists for each area. Once this limit is reached the list is temporarily closed until a property becomes available or a review of the list is undertaken.

Pumlumon (affiliated to Teifi) - Aberystwyth study area

The association, established in 1984, purchases and renovates properties in north Ceredigion for persons 'less able to compete' in the local housing market. Pumlumon states that it caters for seven main groups:

- (i) young people setting up home for the first time;
- (ii) pensioners unable to obtain help from family and friends;
- (iii) people without homes or who are likely to be homeless in the near future;
- (iv) people suffering from serious health problems caused by inadequate living conditions, or whose better living conditions would improve the situation;
- (v) the disabled;
- (vi) people suffering harassment from a landlord;
- (vii) people resident in the region and who wish to stay;
- (vii) people originally from the region who wish to move back.

The association also considers the following factors in its consideration of applications:

- (i) the present housing conditions of the applicant - for example, the number of persons living in the house and lack of inside toilet;
- (ii) the ability of the applicant to manage with the present conditions;
- (iii) the availability of other solutions to the problem - for example, the possibility of obtaining an alternative property;
- (iv) the length of time the applicant has suffered poor living conditions.

Summary

In many ways, the entrance criteria for these associations are similar to those operated by the two local authorities, with each association operating an allocation procedure based on a waiting list and points system. However, it is clear that certain associations are catering for groups currently neglected by the local authority - for example, young single people and childless couples. In addition, some associations took into account the applicant's ability to secure alternative accommodation in the local area - whether this involved the probability of securing local authority housing, private rental or private purchase housing. In this respect, these associations are playing an important part in meeting housing needs within the local community. However, the exact weighting placed

on this factor by housing associations remains unclear. Finally, it emerged that two associations had forged links with the local authority, with the latter providing subsidised development land in exchange for limited nomination rights.

5.4 Summary

Chapter Five has attempted to highlight the characteristics of social housing provision and allocation in each study area.

In terms of local authority housing, the chapter has demonstrated that a council tenancy is very much an urban option, with 59% of dwellings in the Aberystwyth study area, and 71% of Newtown council rental properties located in the main urban centres (Aberystwyth, Newtown and Llanidloes). Indeed, 82% of council dwellings in the former area were located in only 26% of communities, and in the latter area, 91% of such provision was concentrated in one third of all communities.

Each study area had experienced considerable losses of council properties across the 1980s - one-quarter of the Aberystwyth stock and one-third of Newtown local authority dwellings. The level of sales showed widespread spatial variation, with four communities in the Aberystwyth area and seven Newtown communities witnessing losses of more than half of their council stock over the 1980s. However, sales in each study area were generally at a higher level in the outlying villages, particularly of three- and four-bedroom houses.

Both housing departments operated a points-based allocation system, updated on an annual basis. Applicants were allowed to select three areas of residence, with tenancies offered to the highest pointed applicant in an individual community. In each area, certain groups were rehoused outside the points system: the accepted homeless; ex-tied housing tenants; key workers; and persons with medical priority. Council housing was theoretically available to all adult residents, although in reality, the points system was dominated by criteria relating to property structure, basic amenities and severe housing need. It was suggested that young single people and childless couples, particularly those forced to pay relatively high rents for private sector accommodation had little realistic chance of climbing up the waiting list. Attention needs to be given to the plight of such groups who are unable to secure suitable affordable alternative housing in the local area.

The size of the local authority waiting list and the level of accepted homelessness had increased over recent years in each study area. In the Aberystwyth study area, one household on the list was waiting for an average of 2.6 council properties, and each household in the Newtown area was waiting for 2.6 such properties. Such mean levels mask considerable internal variations in waiting list / stock level ratios. Indeed, in six Aberystwyth communities and seven communities within the Newtown study area, the waiting list total constituted at least half of the total council stock. Expressed demand for council housing was greatest in the urban centre, with the town of Aberystwyth containing 62% of the study area's local authority housing, but representing the preferred location for 75% of applicants on the waiting list. Similarly, 52% of applicants in the Newtown study area wished to relocate to the Newtown urban centre, even though it contained only 48% of the overall council stock. Thus, it would appear that the actual and perceived chances of rehousing are strongest within the main towns of each study area.

A breakdown of the Ceredigion waiting list revealed that two-fifths of applicants were elderly persons, around one-third were non-elderly families and one-quarter were non-elderly single people and childless couples. Around 43% of applicants were living in private rented accommodation and 7% were currently residing in caravans. The greatest expressed demand was for one-bedroom properties (68%), particularly flats and bungalows, with only 12% of applicants requesting properties containing three or four bedrooms.

Housing association provision had increased considerably over recent years, although such growth had failed to plug the gap in social rental dwellings caused by council house sales across the 1980s. Indeed, for each new dwelling provided by housing associations within the two study areas during the 1980s, two council houses were sold to sitting tenants. In short, total social rental housing provision fell by 11% in Ceredigion and 16% in Montgomeryshire in the 1981-91 period.

New housing association provision was dominated by 'new build and acquisition' self-contained general accommodation units - accounting for 82% of Ceredigion provision and all association provision within Montgomeryshire - and was concentrated in the urban centres. Relative to the national situation, associations in each study area provided for only a small number of special needs groups - catering for domestic violence cases and people with learning difficulties. Finally, only two of the five housing associations active in the two study areas could be described as 'local', with their head office located within the study areas.

Housing association allocation procedures were similar to those reported for each local authority, although certain associations provided for young people and childless couples who were unable to secure alternative suitable, affordable accommodation. In addition, two associations provided limited nomination rights to the local authority.

The next chapter moves the focus of investigation from the public/social rental sector to the private sector, and considers the characteristics of provision and allocation of private sale housing within each case study area.

CHAPTER SIX: THE PROVISION AND ALLOCATION OF PRIVATE HOUSING

6.1 Introduction

The paucity of rural research examining the roles of institutions and gatekeepers within the private housing market was noted in Chapter One. The present chapter sets out to partially redress the urban-rural imbalance in such work, by considering the activities and interests of housing agents identified as important within urban research in a rural context. In short, Chapter Six considers three key aspects of the private market within the countryside:

- (i) processes of production - the activities of housebuilders within each study area, and the intervention of the planning system between landowners and builders;
- (ii) processes relating to the financing of housing consumption - the operations of building societies within the study areas;
- (iii) processes of exchange - the activities of estate agents, and temporal and spatial variations in domestic property prices within each area.

6.2 Building companies (housing production)

6.21 Introduction

Very little research has been undertaken which has examined the operations and attitudes of builders within rural areas. Urban-based studies of the nature of the building industry conducted in the 1970s, and reviewed in Chapter One, identified three scales of operation - small, medium and large building companies, with the large companies smallest in number, but politically and financially strongest.

6.22 Aims

This section investigates the operations of building firms active within each case study area. It considers five key aspects of local building work:

- (i) the scales of operation;
- (ii) the types of work being undertaken;
- (iii) the construction of new property;
- (iv) the opinions and involvement of builders in local needs and social housing schemes;
- (v) the perceived problems associated with operating in the local housing market.

6.23 Methodology

The section is based on a survey of local building firms conducted in July and August 1990. A search of entries in the Yellow Pages revealed that 28 building firms were operating in the Aberystwyth area and a further 37 were active within the Newtown case study area. A short questionnaire, covering letter and stamped-addressed envelope sent to each firm resulted in 17 completed responses even after reminder letters had been sent. Such a low response rate (26%) may be due to the fact that a proportion of the surveyed companies were not involved in residential work, since the sample was generated from a list of general building firms. Thus, it is conceivable that some companies may have been involved solely in commercial property work, or in infrastructural projects. A total of 11

completed questionnaires (30%) were received from builders in the Newtown area and 6 from Aberystwyth firms (21%).

6.24 Scales of operation

Each study area was characterised by a relatively small-scale building industry. Only one firm - in the Newtown area - employed more than ten workers, with almost 60% of companies operating with less than five employees. A greater proportion of longer established building firms existed in the Aberystwyth area - half had been operating for more than twenty years, compared to around one-fifth in the Newtown study area. Four companies - three in the Newtown area and one in the Aberystwyth study area - had been established in the 1980s.

Table 6.1: The scales of operation of building firms active in each area

	Newtown	Aberystwyth	Both
<u>years of operation:</u>			
less than 10	3	1	4
10 - 19	6	2	8
20 and over	2	3	5
<u>permanent workforce:</u>			
up to 5	7	3	10
6 - 10	3	3	6
more than 10	1	0	1

6.25 Types of work undertaken

The small-scale nature of the residential building industry within the case study areas is highlighted further in Table 6.2. Firms were asked to state the proportions of their usual work that fell into certain categories. The most common types of work undertaken by builders in each study area were extensions, conversions and repairs involving privately-owned residential properties. Sixteen firms (94%) were involved in this type of work, with thirteen stating that such work accounted for most of their work, and another that it represented all the firm's work. In addition, around three-quarters of companies had been involved in commercial building work, although such work accounted for only a small proportion of total work.

Roughly two-thirds of building firms had also been involved in housing construction, with a higher proportion of companies in the Newtown area (73%) than in the Aberystwyth study area (33%) engaged in new builds. Private builder involvement in rental housing schemes appeared low in each area, with one-third of firms in the Aberystwyth area and 45% of those operating in the Newtown study area having been involved in local authority housing projects, and less than one-fifth of builders in each area having worked on housing association schemes. Involvement in local authority schemes appeared strongest amongst the larger building firms, although it was stated that even amongst these companies, such work played only a minimal part in their day-to-day operations.

Table 6.2: Types of usual work undertaken by builders (percentage of all builders)

	Newtown	Aberystwyth	Both
residential	91	100	94
commercial	73	67	76
new builds	73	33	65
extensions, conversions & repairs	91	100	94
privately owned properties	100	100	100
private rented properties	45	50	47
local authority projects	45	33	41
housing association projects	18	17	18

The vast majority of companies sub-contracted work out to other firms or individuals. Only two building companies in the Newtown area and a single firm in the Aberystwyth study area carried out all their work 'in house', with the types of work most frequently sub-contracted being: electrical work (mentioned by 11 builders); plumbing (10); bricklaying (7); and painting (7).

The types of work currently being undertaken by building firms at the time of the survey are highlighted in Table 6.3. In total, nine companies were engaged in extension, renovation, repair and alteration work on residential properties, a further five firms were

involved in housebuilding projects, whilst commercial work accounted for the current work of five firms. Only one company was engaged in a local authority housing project.

Table 6.3: The current work of building firms

	Newtown	Aberystwyth	Both
extensions	2	3	5
renovations	3	1	4
house construction	3	2	5
repairs & alterations	1	5	6
local authority repair contracts	1	0	1
commercial work	3	2	5
grant work	1	0	1
workshop joinery	1	0	1

6.26 Housebuilding

The survey revealed that ten building companies had been involved in house building in the previous ten year period - seven in the Newtown area (64%) and three Aberystwyth firms (50%). New builds were dominated by just one company in each area - firm D in the Newtown area had provided 64% of all newly built properties between 1981-90, and firm Q, operating within the Aberystwyth area, had constructed roughly 91% of all new properties across this period. A greater number of building firms (15) had been involved in residential property extension work during the last ten years. In the Newtown area, 5 companies had each been involved in more than 15 extensions, whilst the maximum number built was 9 in the Aberystwyth study area.

Nine building firms provided details of the procedure used in securing new residential building work. Eight companies stated that most of their house construction work emanated from private individuals contacting the company. In addition, five firms were involved in land purchases as a precursor to speculative property construction, whilst firm M, operating in the Aberystwyth area, also tendered for social housing building contracts. Those companies involved in land purchase stated that they tended to look for plots of less than one acre in size, and generally constructed between 1-10 dwellings per plot (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: The number of properties built per plot

firm A	8 houses per 1 acre site
firm B	2 houses per 1/2 acre site
firm L	1 house per plot
firm Q	10 houses per 1 acre site

New construction was dominated by particular property types - detached houses (built by 7 companies during the previous five years) and bungalows (8 companies), with only firm H in the Newtown area having built houses aimed specifically at first-time buyers. Such a pattern of new private provision is reflected in the selling and asking prices of properties constructed within the previous 12 months. Only two builders had built properties with selling prices below £40 000, with new housing built by the other four companies selling for more than £60 000. Whilst it is unclear whether such properties have been built to customer specifications or represent speculative development, it remains the case that newly constructed houses in each area tended to be concentrated at the upper end of the price range.

6.27 Social housing and low-cost schemes

Those companies involved in property construction were questioned on their attitudes to and involvement with social housing and low-cost housing schemes. Eight companies expressed support for both housing association and low-cost housing projects, whilst local authority schemes received the backing of six building firms. The comments provided by firms on this issue are highlighted below:

"local authority housing should be offered to tender, as direct works construction proves too expensive"
firm B.

"[these projects are] mostly tied up with firms from outside the area"
firm C

"local authority and housing association properties mostly go to firms out of the area"
firm H.

"low-cost housing requires low-cost land"
firm L.

"if local authorities, who are currently not ploughing council house revenue into new dwellings, would release land to private companies at sensible prices then they could attach conditions whereby cheap housing would be made available to young people. Currently these people have absolutely no chance of becoming home owners"
firm M.

"[I am] in favour of all types of housing"
firm Q.

Although a majority of firms expressed a willingness to become involved in housing association and low-cost housing schemes, in reality, very few companies had participated in this kind of work. Two firms operating in the Newtown area had been involved in local authority and housing association projects, with another Aberystwyth-based firm having participated in a local authority housing scheme. No companies were currently involved in low-cost housing developments.

Builders were asked to state the circumstances under which they might consider constructing low-cost housing. It appeared that the main obstacle currently blocking builders' participation in such schemes was the high price of land for residential development:

"land [needs to be] made available at a price which enables the construction of low-cost housing. The exorbitant price of building land means that low-cost housing means high density housing, or flats, which we consider to be unsuitable for young people who are likely to have families"
firm M

"local authorities have land in their possession. They should release some of this for trial low-cost schemes. They may argue that they have been stopped from building rental housing by the Government, but I know that they have held many acres of land for up to 20 years and more, and have built nothing and this is through Labour and Conservative governments. Local authorities could provide the low-cost land needed"
firm L

Firm L considered that, in addition to low-cost land release, three further factors might help promote low-cost housing schemes:

"when we talk about low-cost housing, we must have a finished product of £30000, with a maximum price of £35000, because the salary earned by young people in the area would only enable them to secure a mortgage up to this figure. It may therefore be possible if: the local authority releases land; the planning system is flexible; maximum discounts are given for materials; and labour costs are saved, e.g. self-build units"
firm L

6.28 Operational difficulties

Several builders felt that the high cost of building land together with its limited availability were the main factors restricting their present house building operations. Difficulties associated with gaining planning permissions for residential developments were also mentioned.

"land prices are excessive for all plots...the plots that are available limit the developer to building costly housing, due the cost of plots..."
firm L

"...planning authorities look at applications with a negative attitude, and start by refusing applications, and then the applicant has to battle his way through appeals, etc. to pass his application. They believe that they are the guardians of the environment, and everyone else is intent on destruction, whereas all we want to do is build places for people to live, and we are as concerned as they are about the environment. We need a little flexibility"
firm L

"[there is] almost no land for sale in or close to Aberystwyth, with [limited] supply and [great] demand producing high land prices"
firm M

6.29 Perceptions of change

The final part of the survey considered builders' perceptions of recent changes within their own work and in the nature of residential building work in the local area. In respect to individual work, around three-quarters of building firms - 9 in the Newtown area and 4 firms in the Aberystwyth study area - had expanded their operations in the last five

years, although an Aberystwyth builder's work had "reduced somewhat" in the last 12 months.

With regard to the nature of building work within the local area, different companies, not surprisingly, had witnessed different types of change within each area. This said, several companies had noticed a reduction in the number of larger residential developments over the last five years, whilst smaller-scale residential work had continued at a fairly constant level. The responses of each building firm are illustrated below:

"over the first five years after setting up in business, work was mainly confined to extension and repair work. In latter years, following requests from past customers, we purchased land in order to build a small number of new homes to meet this general demand. However, conversion and extension work still forms a large part of the business"

firm A

"in 1990 we have been engaged in only small jobs due to high interest rates"

firm C

"less new housing"

firm D

"more clients having extensions and generally upgrading (new windows, bathrooms, roofs)"

firm F

"[I have] more work now"

firm H

"more high density private estates and self-build"

firm I

"major changes in building have been caused by the D.B.R.W."

firm J

"the larger contracts for the bigger firms have dried up, therefore they have felt the pinch. There is however an abundance of work for the smaller contractor, and I'm sure this will persist through 1991"

firm L

"the only new construction has been sheltered accommodation due to the grants available from the Government. The amount of new housing has gradually moved further out into the countryside, that is...development in outlying villages"

firm M

"increase in costs"
firm N

"more timber-framed properties"
firm P

Thus, it can be seen that the building industry in each area is relatively small-scale in nature, with new constructions characterised more by customer request than speculative development. The main perceived obstacle to housebuilding operations - both of general and low-cost housing - was the restrictive nature of the planning system, which had limited the amount of suitable development land and consequently increased the price of such land. In this respect, builders were opposed to restrictions on the level and locations of new housebuilding in the local area. The following section examines in greater detail the characteristics of the planning system.

6.3 The planning system (intervention between landowners and builders)

6.31 Introduction

In recent years much discussion has taken place concerning the role of the planning system in controlling new residential development in the British countryside. For some, a strict planning regime, preventing new housebuilding in the open countryside, is seen as essential for the maintenance of an unspoiled landscape. For others, the same planning system is viewed as placing landscape protection over and above the needs of many rural residents. For others still, the planning structure is considered to be open to misuse, with different planning outcomes resulting from similar applications. Two aspects of disquiet concerning the workings of the planning system are illustrated below:

"'why can't I build a house for my son/daughter on that small plot of land I own' is a question that Christopher Kimpton is constantly asked. As Pembrokeshire's only Private Chartered Town Planning Consultant, he says many of his clients come to him because they are disgruntled with the local planning system and the apparently unfair manner in which applications for similar development proposals are decided"

Kimpton (1989, p10)

"policy, as we all know, is based on a few simple propositions that may not be queried. One is that the rural landscape should remain for ever as it was in 1948, except for its large-scale destruction by farmers or for the building of roads to somewhere else. Another is that those 'precious agricultural acres' are holy, even if the bottom has fallen out of the market for their produce. A third is that any new housing should be extensions or infill to existing rural settlements. A fourth is that any new housing elsewhere has to be lied about so that it appears to be the home of a member of that dying breed, the agricultural worker. There is a fifth, unspoken, policy, which is that if you are rich you can get away with anything."

Ward (1990, p232)

Ward cites the cases of two families in South Suffolk who have tried to build houses on their own land but have been refused planning permission since the applications constituted development in the open countryside. Ward concludes:

"I find the families concerned remarkably resigned to rigid policies that frustrate their reasonable and understandable aspirations. They know that whoever's interests the system is intended to protect, it isn't going to be theirs" (p232)

Such a 'landscape preservation versus homes for locals' discussion has been played out in recent years within the Aberystwyth study area. In 1989, the Chief Planner of Dyfed County Council criticised Ceredigion District Council planning committee for allowing 'back door consent' on some of the applications that it had approved. The principal complaint related to residential development in the open countryside:

"I know that there is good reason for it [back door planning] in members' minds - providing homes for retiring farmers. The trouble is that retired farmers die or move away. Rather than have an empty house, planning committee members lift the occupancy restrictions and you end up with people coming in from outside the area and taking up these houses. The result is 'suburban' rural areas. Parts of Ceredigion have bungalow after bungalow after bungalow. We are trying to sell Dyfed in terms of its whole ethos of good wholesome countryside. Visitors from the Midlands and elsewhere like it because it does not have the 'bungaloid' development of other places"

Bowen (1989)

This section investigates the role played by the planning system in each study area. More specifically, it examines two aspects of the planning structure:

- (i) planning policy relating to housing provision;
- (ii) the characteristics of planning applications, decisions and refusals.

6.32 Methodology

The first part of the section is based on housing policies contained in the most recent County Structure Plans, whilst the second part draws on information from a survey of planning applications submitted to Ceredigion and Montgomeryshire planning departments during 1989. With regard to the applications survey, samples were taken from the minutes of council meetings deposited in public libraries. Due to varying styles of presentation of planning submissions adopted by each authority two sampling techniques were used in the survey. In the case of Ceredigion planning authority, each application was labelled with both an individual number and the year of application, and so it was relatively straight forward to generate a 100% sample of planning applications submitted in 1989. Montgomeryshire, however, did not include the year of submission on

its published planning applications and so it was not possible to ascertain the exact number of applications for 1989. In order to overcome this difficulty, a sample was taken of applications published in four sets of council minutes - January, March, June and October 1990. These two sampling procedures resulted in a total sample of 422 planning applications - 254 in the Aberystwyth area and 168 in the Newtown study area.

6.33 Housing in the structure plans

This section is based on policies relating to new housing provision extracted from the most recent County Structure Plans - the first alteration (November 1990) of the Dyfed Plan and the first alteration (February 1991) of the Powys Structure Plan.

The availability of land for residential development - each plan states that sufficient land will be made available to accommodate an average of between 320-330 dwellings per annum for a period of ten years in the case of Dyfed, and twenty years for Powys. The amount of land available for residential development within any district shall be at least equivalent to the number of housing completions in the previous ten years, or five times the mean annual completion rate for the preceding ten year period, whichever is the greater.

Settlement policy - Dyfed operates a hierarchical settlement policy with four scales of residential development permitted in different areas. Within the Aberystwyth study area, two settlements were allocated for major residential development - Aberystwyth and its suburbs, and Bow Street - in which development is permitted that is 'broadly consistent with a settlement's share of the district's most recent census population' (H3). Moderate residential development is permitted in a further two settlements - Rhydyfelin and Talybont, whilst the villages of Borth, Capel Bangor, Llandre, Llanfarian, Penrhyncoch and Pontrhydfendigaid have been designated as recipients of modest residential development. Only minor housing development is allowed in the remaining villages within the study area.

No such hierarchical development policy exists within the Powys Structure Plan. In many ways, the Powys plan leaves the spatial distribution of new housing to market forces, although the level of permissions and land release are regulated to ensure that 'housing development at area centres and larger settlements does not have the effect of depriving their surrounding rural areas of appropriate housing development' (H3). In addition, the plan states that larger residential developments may be allowed in settlements if it can be demonstrated that such new housing would benefit economic and social development in the local area. Intervention will also take place if the 'character' of a settlement has been 'adversely affected' by recent housing development, with further release of land for residential development possibly being reduced.

Sensitive development - each plan states that new residential development should take account of the character of an individual settlement - both in terms of the scale, siting, design and landscaping of the development, and the potential effects on the social and cultural fabric of the local area. The Powys plan also considers the linguistic consequences of development in areas where the use of Welsh is strong. In addition to these factors, each plan specifies a series of criteria that need to be satisfied by proposed developments: safe road access; capable of being serviced at reasonable cost; and ensuring that the development does not cause 'significant adverse effects upon the amenities of neighbouring properties' (Powys, H4).

Development in the open countryside - in each plan there exists a policy involving a 'general presumption against new residential development...in the open countryside' (Dyfed, H8). However, new residential development may be allowed in such areas if it can be demonstrated that the proposed development is needed by a key worker who is required to live close to a place of employment. In addition, the Dyfed plan states that there would be a presumption against proposals that contribute towards 'ribbon development' on the edges of settlement boundaries.

Redundant buildings - each plan allows for the conversion and limited extension of existing redundant buildings within the open countryside, provided that the development meets the following requirements: it satisfies transport access and service provision

criteria; the design is sensitive to the immediate surroundings; and the building is not derelict.

Local needs housing - the Powys Structure Plan allows for small-scale housing developments in addition to general housing allocations in areas where there exists a proven local need. In addition to satisfying general criteria relating to new house construction, such developments also have to ensure that the proposed housing remains available for local people in perpetuity.

6.34 A survey of planning applications for 1989

Applications by type

Applications concerning new property constructions dominated planning applications submitted to each authority in 1989 - accounting for 57% of applications in the Aberystwyth area and 74% of those submitted within the Newtown study area. The next most frequent type of application related to property extensions, which made up one-fifth of Aberystwyth applications and 15% in the Newtown area. The only other significant type of application was property conversion which accounted for 14% of applications in the Aberystwyth area and 10% in the Newtown study area. Within this group of applications, conversion of outbuildings to residential dwellings dominated (5-6%), although in the Newtown area 3% of applications involved conversions of such buildings to form holiday accommodation. Several applications in the Aberystwyth study area, particularly in the urban area, concerned conversions of property from commercial to domestic usage, and vice versa, and also the conversion of properties into flats and bedsits. In addition, property renovations and 'minor work' each accounted for 5% of residential planning applications within the Aberystwyth area.

New build applications

Although applications for new housing dominated submissions to each authority, the nature of such proposals varied between study areas. Planning applications in the Newtown area generally involved larger developments - 3.0 dwellings per application -

than in the Aberystwyth study area, where the mean size of each application was 2.3 dwellings. Within the Newtown area, larger new build proposals were concentrated in the more accessible eastern parts, and particularly in an area to the east of the Newtown urban centre. Larger developments within the Aberystwyth study area tended to be concentrated in the Aberystwyth urban area and a series of peri-urban commuter villages. Thus, it can be suggested that new build schemes within the Newtown study area were partly influenced by external factors, that is proximity to the eastern employment towns of Montgomery, Welshpool, Oswestry and Shrewsbury. In the Aberystwyth area, by contrast, the spatial pattern of house construction applications seemed to be influenced more by internal factors, that is, proximity to the employment centre of Aberystwyth and the constraints of a key settlement policy. In some ways, variations in the nature of applications for new housing in each area is reinforced by the operations of house builders. In the Aberystwyth study area, only one building company involved in new build applications was not based in the area, compared to ten firms applying for permissions in the Newtown area. Indeed, within the latter area, three applications came from building companies based in Doncaster, Surrey and Walsall.

New build applications for key worker accommodation accounted for around 11% of Aberystwyth applications and 8% of applications within the Newtown study area. Such applications frequently involved agricultural employees and usually concerned residential developments in the open countryside. In addition, two proposals in the Newtown area concerned new accommodation for retired farmers in locations outside settlement boundaries.

Limited evidence of possible 'land banking' was uncovered by the survey, with 4% of applicants in each study area requesting a renewal of a previously granted planning permission for residential development on their land. Furthermore, 3% of applicants in the Aberystwyth study area were attempting to overturn a previously imposed condition of occupancy on a recently built dwelling- restrictions that limited future occupation to an agricultural worker or local resident.

The outcome of applications

Within the survey, an attempt was made to trace the development, and ascertain the outcome, of individual applications. In many ways, this proved to be a problematic exercise, with many applications being deferred at one council meeting and then accepted at the next. However, many hours of cross-referencing in public libraries located almost all application decisions.

In each study area, slightly less than half of all planning applications were accepted by the planning committee, although some of these permissions were subject to a number of conditions (3% of permissions in the Aberystwyth area were dependent on the applicant signing a Section 52 (now 106) Agreement limiting future occupancy of the proposed development). A much lower proportion of new build applications received planning permissions - in the Aberystwyth area, permissions were granted to 31% of new build applications and 48% of total applications, whilst the corresponding proportions for such applications in the Newtown area were 34% and 45%. Overall, one-fifth of applicants in the Aberystwyth study area and 15% of Newtown applications were refused planning permissions, with deferred applications making up the remaining 32% of applications in the former area, and 40% of proposed schemes in the latter study area. In the process of decision making, planning committees conducted site visits in the case of 15% of applications within the Aberystwyth area and 4% of Newtown proposed developments.

Reasons for refusal

A follow-up survey of planning refusals was conducted amongst applications within the Aberystwyth study area for the period 1985-89. A total of 400 explanations stated for planning permission being refused were recorded and a synopsis of these explanations is provided in the commentary below and in Table 6.5.

The most frequently cited reason for planning refusal - and accounting for four out of every ten stated explanations - related to a contravention of the planning authority's policy of restricting residential development in the open countryside. In addition, applications deemed to represent ribbon development and those conflicting with 'a policy to protect and conserve a special landscape' accounted for 7% and 6% of refusals

respectively. Slightly less than one-quarter of refusals related to inadequate vehicle access provision, with developments deemed as detrimental to local amenities accounting for a further 14% of refusals. A total of 16 'key worker' applications concerning new housing in the open countryside were turned down for reasons that the planning committee considered that the application did not warrant exceptional treatment. Finally, Ceredigion planning committee refused permission for ten schemes for reasons relating to inadequate design of the external surface of a residential dwelling.

Table 6.5: Reasons stated for planning refusals in the Aberystwyth study area 1985-89

residential development in the open countryside and not related to primary industry	39.5
inadequate vehicle access, parking, road layout	23.0
inadequate site - development would be detrimental to amenities of area	14.0
application constitutes ribbon development	6.7
application conflicts with policy to protect and conserve special landscape	5.7
agricultural application not deemed suitable for exception from above	4.1
design of external surface of building below required standard	2.6
conversion of inappropriate buildings for residential use outside established settlement	1.6
loss of privacy to surrounding properties	1.6
overloading of local sewerage facilities	1.3
<i>total refusals</i>	<i>387</i>

In short, this section has considered the operations of the planning system, and its attempts at controlling residential development, particularly in the open countryside. Clearly, there exists opposition to such restrictive planning policies, both from local residents who are either unable to secure suitable land for housebuilding or afford the high price of new housing, and from builders who see the planning system as interfering with their operations. The next section moves the focus onto the operations and interests of building societies within the local housing market.

6.4 Building societies (financing the consumption of housing)

6.41 Introduction

Research examining the role of building societies within the private housing market has been limited to urban areas. Such work, conducted mainly in the 1970s, demonstrated that societies wielded considerable power in determining which households could become home owners (Boddy, 1976 - Newcastle; Williams, 1976 - Islington). This section attempts to shed light on the operations of building societies in the two case-study areas. It examines four aspects of societies' activity:

- (i) whether society lending policies discriminate against particular groups, properties or locations;
- (ii) the attitudes of societies towards low-cost housing and social housing schemes;
- (iii) the perceived problems within the local housing market;
- (iv) the characteristics of mortgage advancement.

6.42 Methodology

A postal survey of building societies within each study area was conducted in September and October 1990, with a short questionnaire, covering letter and stamped addressed envelope being sent to each branch manager. Five branch managers responded to the survey, with the remaining four failing to reply even after reminder letters had been sent to them. Of the five responses to the survey, one manager stated that his branch was 'unable to take part in the survey'. Participating managers commented that they had experienced difficulties providing detailed, localised information on mortgage allocations, with two managers stating that such data was not available at branch level. This said, the manager of a Newtown building society provided detailed responses to virtually all questions.

As such, the section should be seen as providing illustrative not comprehensive details of the operations of a limited number of building societies active in the Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas. In addition, the section utilises information taken from a similar

survey, undertaken by the Snowdonia National Park in March 1990, that attempted to gather the views of branch managers towards local needs housing within the Park's area. In order to guarantee the anonymity of individual branches that participated in the survey, society names have been replaced by the letters A, B and C in the case of the Aberystwyth area, and the Newtown branch by the letter D.

6.43 Properties, groups and locations preferred for mortgage lending ?

Each branch manager considered certain types of property as unsuitable for the purposes of mortgage advance. The list of unsuitable properties mentioned by managers included: pre-cast reinforced concrete properties; commercial properties; timber properties; rented accommodation; housing association properties; mobile and static homes; and properties unfit for human habitation. Such restrictions varied between branches - with society A including seven and society B enforcing just a single restriction. It is clear from this list of 'unsuitable' properties that certain restrictions may adversely affect low-cost housing opportunities. For example, timber properties are associated with considerably lower construction costs than brick-built dwellings. In addition, it would appear that persons wishing to renovate low priced derelict properties could experience difficulties obtaining a mortgage.

Three branch managers commented that they did not consider any particular occupations or income levels as unsuitable for mortgage advancement. Rather, managers stated that "each application [was] looked at on its own merits" (branch A). The fourth manager pointed out that his branch would not normally lend to persons engaged in temporary employment. With regard to the 'redlining' of particular areas, no evidence was uncovered by the survey, which would seem to confirm the view of a Newtown estate agent that there exist relatively few "bad" residential areas within the countryside (see Section 6.55). Managers expressed a willingness to lend to council house tenants wishing to purchase their home. Indeed, the differential between purchase price and market valuation meant that many ex-council houses were viewed as "good business", with two

branch managers willing to advance 100% mortgages to council house purchasers, and another prepared to advance up to 95% of the purchase price.

For general residential properties, maximum mortgage advances tended to fall between 90-95% of either the selling price or valuation, whichever constituted the lower figure. One manager stated that 100% mortgages would only be advanced to "professional people...with a minimum salary of £15 000 per year", whilst two other branch managers commented that such mortgage advances were available at their discretion. Valuations were undertaken by a panel of local estate agents employed by each building society branch, with an Aberystwyth manager stating that his branch employed six out of nine local agents for this purpose.

6.44 Low-cost and social housing

Managers were asked about their society's lending policy towards properties that contained covenants restricting future occupancy to 'local' persons. Three branch managers stated that they would be willing to advance mortgages for such properties, although the valuation of the property would take into account the effects that an occupancy restriction would have on the future selling price. In other words, a Section 106 property would receive a lower valuation and consequently a lower maximum mortgage level. Thus, the applicant would have to bridge a larger gap between the asking price of the property and mortgage advance available from the building society. The other branch manager commented that his policy regarding such properties was to submit each case to head office.

Similar attitudes towards local needs housing schemes were uncovered in a survey conducted by the Snowdonia National Park Authority in March 1990. Seven out of twelve managers of building societies operating within Gwynedd stated that they were generally in favour of advancing mortgages on properties containing restricted occupancy covenants. This said, the level of support such schemes would receive in practice appeared low, with several managers using such phrases as 'in principle', 'sympathetic', 'qualified yes', and 'possibly' to describe their commitment. The Council

for Mortgage Lenders, a trade association concerned with housing law and mortgage practice related work of the Building Societies Association, also participated in the Snowdonia study. Two main points from their submission are highlighted below:

"when making loans under the terms of the Building Societies Act, building societies are statutorily bound to ensure that there is adequate security for the loan based on a valuation carried out by a qualified valuer. Restrictions on the number of potential customers will need to be taken into account...

...many societies shy away from committing their support to the use by planning authorities of Section 52 agreements to limit occupancy. Some argue that, ideally, such restrictions might be in the form of a procedure for sale with a fail-safe clause allowing sale in the last resort on open market terms"

Tai Cymru (1990b), 7.30, b, c.

Within the Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas, three branches had provided mortgage finance for housing association projects. The remaining manager considered social housing schemes as "unacceptable for mortgage purposes". The decision on whether to fund such schemes was taken by head office. Two branches in the Aberystwyth study area had participated in housing association projects - one in Aberystwyth, the other in Clwyd, whilst the Newtown branch had helped fund schemes in the districts of Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire, and was also involved with the flexi-ownership scheme operated by the Development Board for Rural Wales in Newtown.

6.45 Local independence of branch managers

Managers stated that they were generally bound by policy guidelines set down by head office. However, the manager of branch B commented that he had limited independence in terms of "local factors, customer relationships and family connections", whilst branch B's manager suggested that:

"there is no difference between head office and branch policy except where sensible discretion is allowed, for example, certain branches may decide upon a maximum income multiple for mortgage lending that is higher or lower than another branch...they may also decide against lending at 100%"

6.46 Local housing market problems

Only one branch manager considered that there existed any particular problems with the local housing market. Such problems were perceived to be related to a limited availability of properties within village locations. However, three managers reported that the number of mortgage defaulters had increased during the previous five years, although it was pointed out that these rises were of a much smaller magnitude than those reported in the South-East of England.

6.47 Mortgage allocations - branches A and D

The final part of the section considers the detailed information on mortgage allocations provided by branch A in Aberystwyth, and, particularly, branch D within the Newtown study area. Table 6.6 highlights that the volume of mortgages advanced by each branch had increased considerably over recent years - branch A reported a rise of 63% in its first two years of operation since 1988, and the manager of branch D had witnessed a five-fold increase in mortgage allocations between 1981-90.

Table 6.6: Number of mortgages advanced 1981-90 - branches A and D

	1981	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
branch A*								60	76	98
branch D	20	22	30	50	45	60	73	85	86	102

* Opened in 1988

In terms of the types of mortgages advanced to customers in recent years, managers reported that around six out of ten were second mortgages. First-time mortgages accounted for only one-fifth of allocations from each branch, with mortgage extensions and remortgages together comprising the remaining 15-20% of advancements.

Table 6.7: Percentage of mortgages advanced by type - branches A and D

	branch A	branch D
first-time mortgages	20	20
second mortgages	65	60
mortgage extensions	10	15
remortgages	5	5

Information on the age of mortgagees and mortgage size provided by branch D is highlighted in Tables 6.8 and 6.9. Considerable variation is evident between single and joint income mortgagees, both in terms of the age of mortgagee and the size of the mortgage advance. Not surprisingly, joint income mortgagees tended to secure mortgages at an earlier age - 60% of mortgages were allocated to applicants under 36 years of age, compared to only 26% of single income mortgagees. Furthermore, joint income mortgage holders were generally able to secure larger advances - 70% were in excess of £40 000, whereas all mortgages advanced to single income applicants totalled less than this amount.

Table 6.8: Percentage of mortgage advances by age group - branch D

age group	single income	joint income
under 25 years	1	5
26 - 30	5	35
31 - 35	20	25
36 - 40	50	20
41 - 50	10	10
51 - 60	10	5
over 60	5	1

Table 6.9: Percentage of mortgages by size of advance - branch D

amount of advance	Single income	Joint income
under £30000	45	5
£30000 - £39999	55	25
£40000 - £49999	**	30
£50000 - £59999	**	25
£60000 and over	**	15

This section has attempted to illustrate some key characteristics of building society operations within each study area. Some evidence emerged of lending policies which discriminated against specific property and employment types, although no policy of 'redlining' was uncovered. The attitude of local building society managers towards new housebuilding also remains unclear, with little evidence uncovered of an opposition to new housebuilding in the countryside. The following section considers the operations and interests of estate agents within each study area involved in the exchange of property.

6.5 Estate agents (housing exchange)

6.51 Introduction

The role of estate agents within the rural housing market has generally remained untouched by researchers. Shucksmith (1981) touched briefly on estate agency in the Lake District, but this was only in relation to buyer groups and property types being purchased. Urban studies of estate agents, however, have provided a useful insight into their role and influence within local housing markets. For example, Williams (1975) argued that estate agents acted to increase their turnover by encouraging gentrification and price rises. Other studies (for example, Boddy (1976)) suggested that agents could be influential in determining the social make-up of the private housing stock by steering certain groups to, and discouraging others from, specific residential areas. As Williams (1976) noted, based on his work in Islington:

"estate agents are not the passive intermediary...but can and do act as agents of change" (p 78)

More recently, Beaverstock et al (1992) have suggested that there still remains a need to investigate:

"the relationships that exist between the housing market and estate agency at national, regional and local scales" (p 33)

It is regarding this latter level of investigation that this section is concerned. In many ways the section is descriptive since very little is known about the characteristics of estate agencies in the countryside. It considers four aspects of agencies:

- (i) the scale of operations;
- (ii) property valuations;
- (iii) characteristics of buyers and properties for sale;
- (iv) opinions of the housing market.

6.52 Methodology

In October and November 1990, letters were sent to the 14 estate agents operating in the study areas detailing the nature of the research project and requesting their participation. From these letters and subsequent telephone conversations, seven agents were interviewed in their offices. The remaining agents were sent an amended copy of the interview schedule by post and asked to respond in writing. Such a procedure produced a further three positive replies, and resulted in an overall sample of ten estate agents - a response rate of 71%. Of these ten agents, six were operating in the Aberystwyth area (A - F) with offices located in the Aberystwyth town centre, and the others were in the Newtown study area (G - J) - with three agents located in Newtown and one in Llanidloes.

6.53 The scales of operation

The scales of operation of agencies within each study area varied considerably. In terms of the duration of operations, four agencies in the Aberystwyth area and two in the Newtown study area had been in business for at least 40 years. Indeed, agency A in Aberystwyth had been operating for 95 years and agency I, in Newtown, had been trading since 1862. The remaining two agencies in the Aberystwyth study area had been established in the mid-to-late 1980s, whilst the other two Newtown agencies had each been operating for around 20 years. Almost all of the agencies were small-scale businesses, with eight of them part of chains containing less than ten branches. The only exceptions to this rule were agencies A (12 branches) and E (part of the Halifax estate agency network) in the Aberystwyth study area. Such a pattern of operation is replicated in the size of the workforce attached to each agency. Only agencies A, C and E in the Aberystwyth area were part of chains that employed in excess of 50 staff (both full- and part-time) (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10: Selected characteristics of estate agencies

estate agency	years of operation	number of branches	employees in branch	employees in all branches
A	95	12	4	80
B	2	2	3	4
C	55	9	4	55
D	45	4	4	8
E	6	nw	4	nw
F	40	1	4	4
G	20	4	3	30
H	20	3	7	12
I	128	4	6	25
J	65	6	4	30

A-F = agents in the Aberystwyth area; G-J Newtown agents; nw = nationwide

6.54 Services provided

Agents were asked about the types of services that their office offered to potential customers. It appeared that each agency provided property valuations and also dealt with property purchases - buying and selling. In addition, some agencies offered other services to clients. For example, seven offices provided structural surveys of property, and six also acted as auctioneers - predominantly for the agricultural industry. Following the 1988 Finance Act, two agencies had become involved in financial advice and management, another provided architectural plans, and agency C, in Aberystwyth, was engaged in property management. In short, a majority of agencies - four in the Aberystwyth area and three in the Newtown study area - offered at least three services to customers.

The procedure adopted for advertising property for sale was remarkably similar, with each branch offering inclusion on a mailing list and window display cards. In addition, and at the client's cost, the property could be advertised in the local press. Clients were also able to request advertisements in more specialised publications, but agents considered that this form of advert was both generally unsuccessful and expensive. Finally, two branches offered inclusion on a computerised mailing list linked to all branches within the agency.

Table 6.11: Services offered by estate agencies

Service	estate agency										total
Valuations	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	10
Surveys	A		C	D	E	F		H		J	7
Financial services	A		C								2
Auctioneering			C	D	E	F	G	H	I		6
Property management			C								1
Livestock sales				D	E		G				3
Architectural plans								H			1
total	3	1	5	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	

6.55 Valuations

The general method used to calculate residential property valuations involved comparability with other agents prices. In addition, the following factors were mentioned by agents as influencing their valuations: property position (4 agents); property location and accessibility (4); insurance valuation guidelines (3); knowledge of the market place (2); a 'gut' feeling (2); and housing demand (1).

Table 6.12: Factors used in valuations

Factor	Ab.	Nt.	total
Knowledge of market place	2	0	2
Comparability with other agents prices/valuations	6	4	10
Insurance valuation guidelines	2	1	3
Property position/condition	4	0	4
'Gut feeling'	2	0	2
Property location/accessibility	3	1	4
Demand	1	0	1

When questioned further on this topic, the vast majority of estate agents admitted that the location of property affected its valuation. For example, three out of four agents active in the Newtown study area commented that there existed a clear east-west price differential, with areas closer to the English border characterised by higher average house prices. This said, one Newtown agent suggested that there existed a smaller price differential within the study area than within urban areas:

"there are not really any bad areas"

Furthermore, the general feeling expressed by agents was that, cutting across this east-west price differential, were more localised variations - between remote, isolated properties; 'commuter' village properties; and properties within the urban areas of Newtown and Llanidloes.

Within the Aberystwyth area, estate agents suggested that properties in the sub-urban and peri-urban areas (those close to the Aberystwyth urban centre), and particularly those villages near to main roads commanded the highest prices. In contrast, lowest priced dwellings tended to be located in the more remote, smaller villages that contained fewer amenities. An Aberystwyth agent commented that the location of a property played an important part in his decision whether or not to take it on his 'books' - in that properties located too far from the agency office were considered to be inconvenient for the business due to the length of travelling time required to show interested persons around the property.

When probed further about the use of other agents' prices in the determination of property valuations, several agents attempted to clarify the matter. One agent suggested that the majority of his colleagues were well established and familiar with the local housing market. Thus, they did not need to confer with each other, since agents provided similar valuations independent of one another. A majority of estate agents, however, suggested that valuations were usually based on both the prices of similar properties within the individual office, and other agents' advertised prices. The following quotations can be taken as indicative of general comments on the issue of property valuations:

"there's no need to take account of other agents in a good market, and in a bad market anything other than a realistic price won't sell"

"if a property has been on the market for some time, and hasn't been sold it is assumed to be over-priced and subsequent similar properties will be offered at lower prices"

However, agents stressed that clients were able to disregard their advice and insist on a higher asking price. Indeed, one estate agent commented that he had several properties

that, in his opinion, were considerably over-priced, and had been 'for sale' for a period exceeding two years.

In the discussion on property valuations, four agents mentioned that they were involved in valuation work for local building societies. It emerged that each building society operating in the study areas had a 'valuation panel' composed of selected local estate agents. The aim of such panels was to ensure 'reasonable', 'independent' valuations of properties for which mortgages were sought. Unfortunately, this link between estate agencies and building societies did not emerge until late in the interview schedule and so the true extent of the practice remains unclear. However, those agents that confirmed their involvement in such valuation panels suggested that most agents participated in this practice. Whether such links constitute a cartel and work to the detriment of potential buyers and sellers is unclear, but these findings would seem to confirm those reported earlier in urban areas (Williams, 1976 in Islington; CDP, 1976 in Newcastle). Furthermore, it also emerged that several of the longer established agencies had links with individual 'tame' developers, who ensured that sales of their new housing were conducted solely through that particular agent.

6.56 Property turnover

In order to gain some understanding of the dynamics of the local housing market estate agents were asked to indicate the types, prices and locations of properties that, in their opinion, sold at the fastest rate. There was general agreement amongst agents that the fastest rates of turnover existed amongst properties at the extremes of the price range - first-time buyer properties, priced below £50 000 and 'more desirable', 'character' properties - usually containing land - typically priced in excess of £100 000. Several agents reported considerable demand over recent years from 'outsiders' - persons from outside the study areas - searching for low-priced derelict properties. In each study area, demand for first-time buyer properties was very much influenced by available employment opportunities, and was greatest in locations within the commuter zones of the main employment centres. Location appeared a less important factor for properties at

the top end of the price range - presumably due to high rates of personal mobility and fewer employment ties associated with such purchasers.

6.57 'Outsiders'

At the time of the estate agent survey, the issue of in-migration within the study areas, particularly of English persons, and its links to house price increases represented a prominent topic in the local media. In an attempt to investigate the scale and characteristics of this in-movement, agents were asked to estimate the proportion of their properties that had been purchased by 'outsider' groups in the preceding twelve months (in this instance, the term 'outsider' refers to persons who moved from outside each district - Ceredigion and Montgomeryshire). In each study area, agents estimated that only one out of ten properties had been purchased by non-local people - 10% in the Aberystwyth area and 14% within the Newtown study area over the last twelve months. This said, most agents pointed out that such a situation had not existed two years previous, with an influx of buyers from areas of England, and particularly the South-East, in the mid-to-late 1980s. However, even in these peak years of in-movement, agents estimated that outsider groups comprised only 20-30% of all house buyers. In terms of second and holiday homes, an Aberystwyth agent stated that only two properties had been sold by his office for leisure purposes in the last two years, whilst an estate agent in the Newtown study area suggested that seasonal home purchases had peaked around 1973-74 and had not been important in the study area since this date.

In terms of the types of properties demanded by outsider groups, Newtown agents considered that traditional properties were the most popular - particularly those containing land, and situated in open countryside close to the Newtown urban area. Estate agents in the Aberystwyth area confirmed this pattern of outsider demand, noting that outsiders tended to look for traditional properties within commuting distance of the Aberystwyth urban area. One Aberystwyth agent, however, felt that outsiders preferred newly built, smaller residential estates located in the peri-urban villages within the study area. Finally, with regard to accusations made by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg that

estate agents were responsible for an escalation of house prices and encouraging English people to move into the local area, an Aberystwyth agent made the point that estate agents were merely following the requests of clients, and that in the two years that the office had been trading, only one customer had specifically requested that their property should be sold to a local Welsh speaking buyer.

6.58 Property types and purchasing groups

This section employs the strategy used by Shucksmith (1981) in his study of the Lake District housing market, and examines the nature of property purchases in recent years. In terms of a breakdown of recent property purchasers, Table 6.13 highlights that, across both areas, around one-third of purchasers were first-time buyers, 45% of buyers were moving through the market, and slightly more than one-fifth were purchasing property for retirement. However, considerable variation was evident between the study areas, with first-time buyers accounting for almost double the number of sales in the Aberystwyth area (39%/23%), whilst higher proportions of purchasers moving through the market, and retirees existed in the Newtown study area. Agents operating within the latter area, however, suggested that retirement purchases had fallen in recent years as a result of a lower level of in-movement. Less consensus emerged regarding such change in the Aberystwyth area.

Table 6.13: Types of purchaser (percentage of all purchasers)

	first-time buyer	moving through the market	retirement
Aberystwyth agents	39	41	20
Newtown agents	23	51	26
Both areas	33	45	22

Property sales in 1990 were dominated by the existing housing stock, with 88% of advertised properties in the Aberystwyth area and 86% of such Newtown properties previously occupied. Such a finding demonstrates the difficulty faced by the planning system in maintaining affordable house prices, given that only 13% of the total stock is

new build. The majority of properties from the existing stock were formerly occupied by local households, although outsider second, holiday and retirement homes accounted for an average of 10% of total advertised properties.

Table 6.14: Previous occupation of properties for sale (percentages)

	local occupation	outsider occupation	newly built
Aberystwyth agents	80	8	13
Newtown agents	72	14	12
Both areas	77	10	13

Although several agents commented that there had been little fluctuation in these proportions through the 1980s, four estate agents stated that the number of newly built properties had fallen dramatically in the latter years of the decade, with these agents considering that such a reduction had resulted from a combination of high interest rates and the restricted availability of land suitable for residential development at reasonable costs.

6.59 Rented accommodation

Only two estate agents in each study area dealt with private rented accommodation. In the Aberystwyth area, one agent was currently offering 20 houses for rent - at an average rental of £260 per month, whilst the other agency was advertising 10 houses (£300 per month) and 10 flats (£100 per month). In the Newtown study area, one agent had a single private rental house for £160 per month, whilst the other stated that houses were usually offered at rentals of between £180-£300 per month. It was generally felt that the majority of private rental accommodation was advertised in other ways - local newspapers, shop windows and word-of-mouth, although several agents commented that some clients who were unable to sell their property had asked them to find tenants for a limited period of 6-12 months, or until they were able to sell their property. In contrast to this limited involvement with private rental accommodation, each agent had recently dealt with sales of ex-council houses. An Aberystwyth agent commented that in the past he had not been

keen on handling ex-council houses but that the depressed state of the local housing market had meant that he 'wouldn't turn anything down at the moment'.

6.510 The state of the local housing market

When asked about the state of the local housing market, responses included 'very quiet', 'depressed', 'static', 'quite slow' and 'difficult', although most agents were expecting the market to improve by Spring 1991 if interest rates were reduced. One Aberystwyth agent considered that estate agents had previously had 'a good time' and that they now 'had to work', whilst another agent admitted that even though the market was 'very quiet' the branch was still selling a minimum of three properties per week. Two Newtown agents considered the decline in the local manufacturing economy was responsible for the 'depressed' housing market, with another two agents not expecting any change 'for the foreseeable future'.

In summary, local estate agents within the sample appeared to represent 'passive intermediaries' rather than 'agents of change', being responsive more to customer demand than channelling different social groups to different residential areas. In addition, little evidence emerged suggesting that agents favoured a restricted housing market. Indeed, agents tended to place more importance on property turnover than price. Again, it would appear that more research is required investigating the operations and interests of estate agents within the countryside. Agents did, however, represent a valuable source of knowledge about the characteristics of the private housing, and it is to the characteristics of domestic property prices that the next section turns.

6.6 Domestic property prices - spatial variations and temporal change

6.61 Introduction

In recent years there has been considerable discussion concerning the high price of housing in Britain's countryside. It has been argued by many commentators that the desirability of rural properties, together with post-war planning restrictions, has pushed up property costs, and 'priced' many local residents out of rural housing markets.

This final section of chapter Six examines two aspects of residential property prices in each study area:

- (i) temporal change through the 1980s;
- (ii) spatial variations across each area in 1990.

6.62 Methodology

Temporal change - Asking prices of properties advertised in the local press (Cambrian News and County Times) for the months of January and July of each year were recorded between 1981-90. In the case of the Newtown sample, it was necessary to include prices advertised two weeks before and after these two months for certain years in order to boost the sample size. Annual sample sizes in the Newtown study area ranged from 36-102 properties, and from 51-127 properties within the Aberystwyth study area. In total, almost 1 300 properties were sampled in the 1981-90 period - 730 in the Aberystwyth study area and 555 properties in the Newtown area.

Spatial variations - Prices were taken from estate agents' residential property guides for May 1990. Although considerable care was taken to prevent the double counting of properties advertised with more than one agent, it is inevitable that some properties have been included more than once, given that some contained limited details and others were advertised at different prices with more than one agent. A total of 509 advertised properties were recorded within the Aberystwyth area and 297 properties in the Newtown study area - a total sample of around 800 properties.

It is recognised that each of these analyses relates to the asking price of property rather than the actual selling price. However, no other method is available that allows an investigation of residential property prices at a local level.

6.63 Temporal change in house prices

Within each study area, considerable increases in house prices were recorded across the 1980s. In the Aberystwyth area, for example, the average price of advertised properties rose from roughly £28 000 in 1981 to around £68 000 in 1990 - an increase of 142%. Similarly, the mean property price in the Newtown study area increased by 122% - from around £26 000 to roughly £58 000 in the same ten year period. Such percentage increases compare with the 148% price rise recorded for Great Britain as a whole between 1981-89. However, an examination of annual price increments reveals that, relative to Great Britain increases, price rises in each local area were concentrated in the latter half of the decade. Between 1981-85, house prices rose by only 5% in the Aberystwyth area and by 10% in the Newtown case study area. In the second half of the eighties, however, property prices increased by around 130% in the former study area and by 103% in the latter area. The corresponding rises recorded in rural Wales as a whole were 35% and 77%, and in Great Britain by 62% in each period.

Table 6.15: Residential property prices in each study area, 1981-90

Aberystwyth area			Newtown area		
year	sample size	mean price	year	sample size	mean price
1981	127	£28 126	1981	36	£26 160
1982	67	£26 350	1982	47	£25 270
1983	61	£26 110	1983	58	£23 270
1984	51	£30 380	1984	46	£28 920
1985	82	£29 630	1985	40	£28 720
1986	83	£37 380	1986	46	£32 150
1987	55	£45 330	1987	52	£36 100
1988	65	£61 780	1988	52	£47 550
1989	65	£61 780	1989	70	£78 450
1990	125	£68 110	1990	102	£58 190
1981-90		£39 984 (142%)	1981-90		£32 030 (122%)

In each area, the greatest proportional price increases were recorded amongst properties at the upper end of the price range. Property prices in the lowest quartile within the

Aberystwyth area increased by around 111% in the 1981-90 period compared to a rise of 143% amongst properties in the highest price quartile. Likewise, in the Newtown study area, the corresponding price increases were 110% and 150%.

Table 6.16 provides a breakdown of price rises by property type. In each area, the greatest proportional price increases were recorded amongst detached properties - 177% within the Aberystwyth area and 178% in the Newtown area. Smallest rises occurred amongst semi-detached properties (86%) in the Newtown area, and terraced houses within the Aberystwyth study area (118%). However, caution needs to be exercised in analysing such price changes, given the small sample sizes associated with each property type. Such small sample sizes also prevent a spatial breakdown of price change. For this reason, a spatial analysis of house prices has been restricted to properties advertised with estate agents in May 1990.

Table 6.16: Property price change, 1981-90: by property type

Property type	1981	1990	1981-90
Aberystwyth area			
terraced	£26 750 (26)	£49 500 (23)	£22 750 (85%)
semi-detached	£24 500 (16)	£49 950 (17)	£25 450 (104%)
detached	£29 000 (45)	£79 500 (33)	£50 500 (174%)
bungalow	£30 500 (24)	£75 000 (24)	£44 500 (146%)
Newtown area			
terraced	£12 580 (6)	£35 460 (15)	£22 880 (172%)
semi-detached	£24 990 (5)	£46 550 (37)	£21 560 (86%)
detached	£27 170 (17)	£79 510 (28)	£52 340 (193%)
bungalow	£25 610 (9)	£71 070 (15)	£45 460 (178%)

6.64 Spatial variations in house prices

The Aberystwyth study area - the average price of residential property advertised by estate agents in May 1990 was £60 551, compared with a mean price of £68 500 in newspaper advertisements for January and July 1990. In the estate agent sample, six out of ten properties were priced at more than £60 000, and almost one-quarter were being offered for over £80 000. Only 8% of advertised residential properties were priced below £40 000.

Table 6.17: Domestic property prices in the Aberystwyth study area - May 1990

	no.	%age
under £30 000	12	2.4
£30 000 - £39 999	30	5.9
£40 000 - £49 999	88	17.4
£50 000 - £59 999	71	14.0
£60 000 - £69 999	102	20.1
£70 000 - £79 999	81	16.0
£80 000 - £89 999	50	9.9
£90 000 - £99 999	25	4.9
£100 000 and over	48	9.5
<i>total</i>	<i>507</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The locations of properties at the lower end of the price range are illustrated in Figure 6.1. The 41 properties priced at less than £40 000 were located in just 19 settlements - 35% of all settlements containing properties for sale. Of these cheaper properties, 7 were located in the urban and sub-urban areas of Aberystwyth; 18 were situated in the peri-urban, commuter villages; and the remaining 14 properties were located in 'remote' areas. Properties for sale at less than £50 000 were available in a total of 34 settlements - 62% of all settlements with advertised properties. Properties within this price range accounted for around one-quarter of advertised properties. The Aberystwyth urban and sub-urban areas, together with the 'commuter' villages of Borth, Talybont, Bow Street and Talybont accounted for roughly 56% of all properties priced below £50 000.

A further breakdown of advertised property is provided in Table 6.18. Six property types were selected from the total sample - two-bedroom terraced house; three-bedroom semi-detached; three-bedroom detached; two-bedroom bungalow; and a three-bedroom bungalow. These property types accounted for around 43% of total properties for sale (many advertisements omitted one or more criterion necessary for the spatial analysis - property price, size and location). Several general observations can be made concerning the spatial distribution of property types in the Aberystwyth study area. Firstly, the problem of affordability has resulted as much from the structure of the private housing stock, as from the price increases witnessed across the 1980s. For example, there were relatively few terraced houses - the cheapest type of property - within the study area. Indeed, two-bedroom terraced houses - with the lowest average price - accounted for

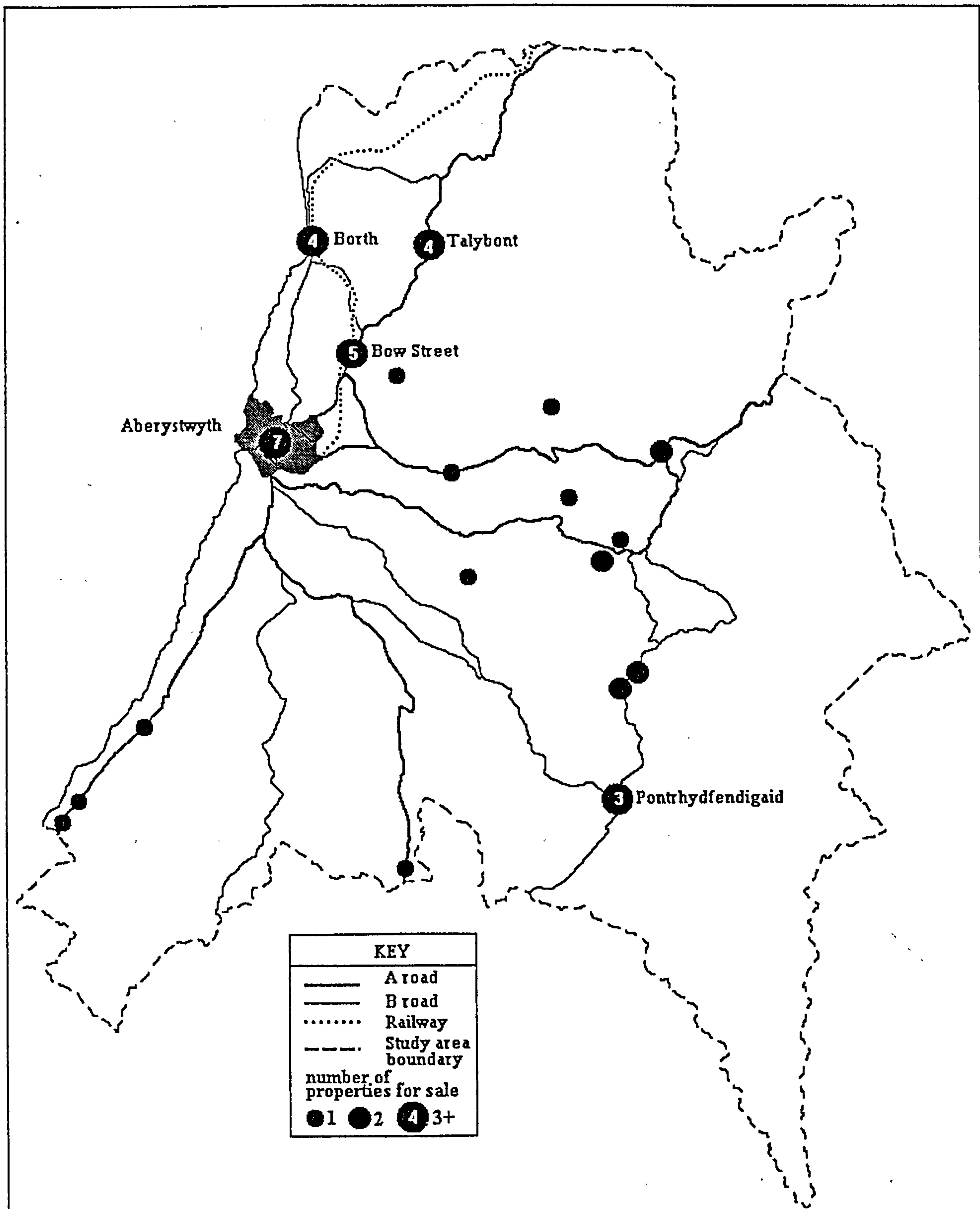


Figure 6.1: The locations of properties priced below £40 000 - the Aberystwyth study area

only 8% of total advertised properties. Furthermore, such housing was available in only 8 settlements throughout the study area. In contrast, the three highest priced property types - three-bedroom bungalows, detached and semi-detached houses - made up almost two-thirds of total properties and were available in between 15-20 settlements.

Table 6.18: Property prices by property type and location - Aberystwyth area

	mean price	number of properties		number of settlements
two-bedroom terraced	£46 485	18	8.3	8
three-bedroom terraced	£53 485	30	13.8	6
three-bedroom semi-detached	£61 990	47	21.6	15
three-bedroom detached	£70 827	41	18.8	19
two-bedroom bungalow	£54 018	31	14.2	16
three-bedroom bungalow	£67 762	51	23.4	20

The Newtown study area - the average price of properties advertised by estate agents in May 1990 was £68 943, slightly higher than the mean price of £58 190 recorded in the local press survey (January and July prices). Almost 56% of advertised properties in the Newtown area were priced in excess of £60 000 - a similar proportion to that recorded in the Aberystwyth study area. However, a higher proportion of Newtown properties were priced over £80 000 - 31% compared to 24%. Only one in ten properties in the Newtown study area were available at asking prices below £40 000.

Table 6.19: Domestic property prices in the Newtown study area - May 1990

	no.	%age
under £30 000	6	2.1
£30 000 - £39 999	23	8.0
£40 000 - £49 999	58	20.3
£50 000 - £59 999	38	13.3
£60 000 - £69 999	29	10.1
£70 000 - £79 999	42	14.7
£80 000 - £89 999	21	7.3
£90 000 - £99 999	20	7.0
£100 000 and over	49	17.1
<i>total</i>	<i>286</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The 29 properties priced below £40 000 in the Newtown area were available in just 11 settlements - one-third of all settlements, and a similar proportion to that recorded amongst the Aberystwyth sample. Of these cheaper properties, 14 were located in the Newtown and Llanidloes urban areas; 4 were in 'accessible' villages; and the remaining

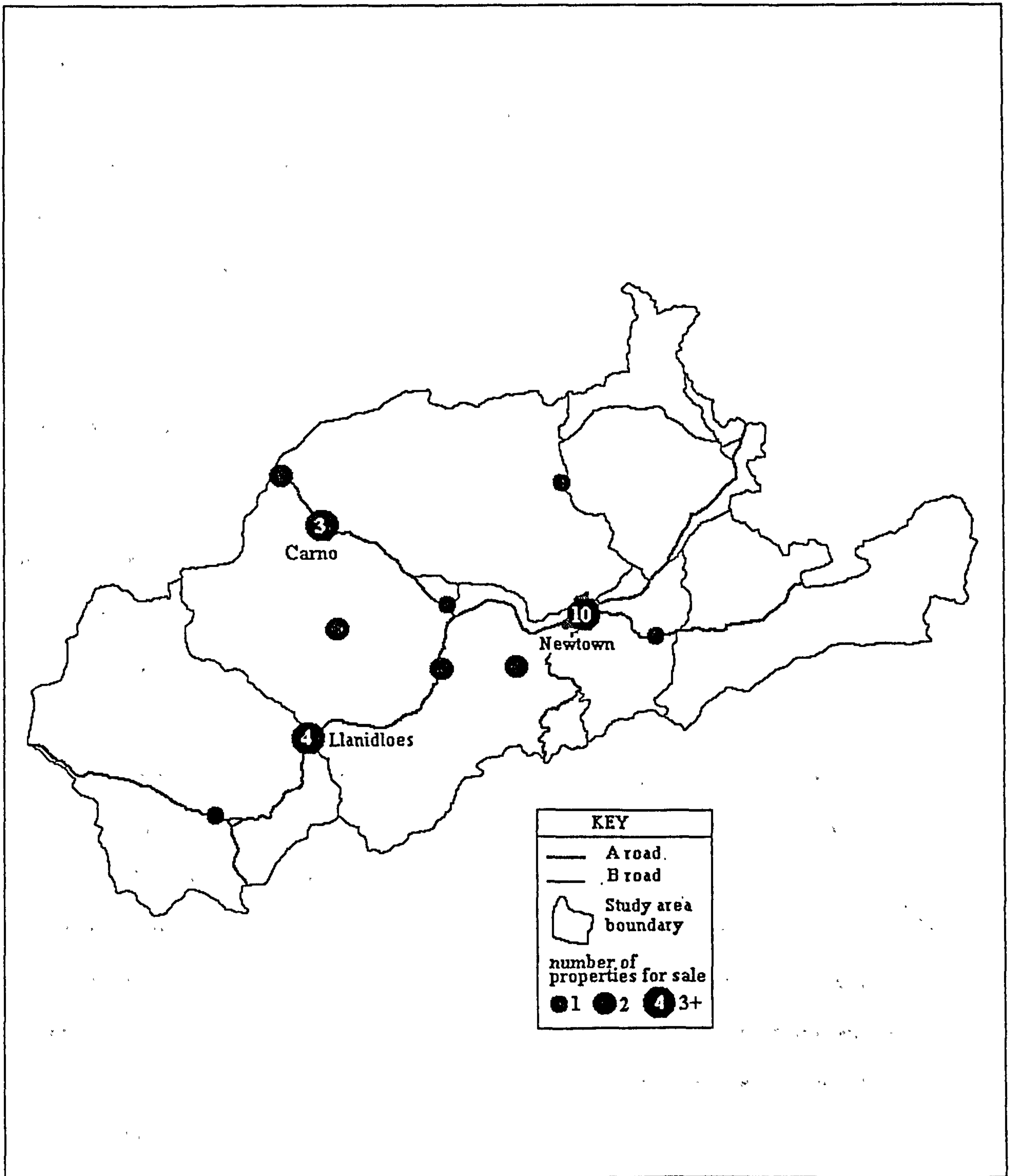


Figure 6.2: The locations of properties priced below £40 000 - the Newtown study area

11 properties were found in the more 'remote' villages (Figure 6.2). Unlike in the Aberystwyth area, properties advertised for less than £50 000 were available only in these same 11 settlements, with almost 60% of such properties located in the Newtown urban and sub-urban areas.

The cheapest property types in the Newtown sample, as in the Aberystwyth study area, were two- and three-bedroom terraced houses. However, such properties made up only 9% and 12% respectively of total properties, and were restricted to only 6 settlements in the case of two-bedroom terraces and just 5 settlements amongst three-bedroom properties. Thus, it appears that, in each area, lower incomed first-time buyers have relatively few opportunities to enter into owner-occupation.

Table 6.20: Property prices by property type and location

	mean price	number of properties		number of settlements
		no.	%age	
two-bedroom terraced	£37 308	13	9.0	6
three-bedroom terraced	£45 224	18	12.4	5
three-bedroom semi-detached	£50 399	37	25.5	10
three-bedroom detached	£78 042	24	16.6	10
two-bedroom bungalow	£58 895	19	13.1	11
three-bedroom bungalow	£71 397	34	23.4	14

Finally, a comparison of residential property prices between the two study areas reveals that smaller, terraced properties were relatively cheaper in the Newtown area. However, at the other end of the property range, larger detached properties and bungalows appeared more expensive in the Newtown study area. Such a finding is confirmed by Tables 6.17 and 6.19 presented earlier. Around 30% of advertised properties within the Newtown area were priced at under £50 000, compared to only 26% of Aberystwyth properties, whilst 24% of Newtown properties were priced at over £90 000 compared to only 14% of properties within the Aberystwyth study area.

6.65 Building plots

Given the considerable discussion in recent years concerning the price of land for residential development, it was decided to record details of building plots advertised in estate agents' property guides. A total of 37 plots were identified that contained asking prices, of which 14 were located in the Aberystwyth area and 23 were situated in the Newtown study area. Unfortunately, relatively few advertisements contained complete details about a plot - that is, size, mains services, price and location - and so the following analysis must be viewed as indicative of the general situation relating to land suitable for residential development.

In each area, the average asking price for building plots was between £25 000 - £30 000, although the size and facilities associated with each plot varied considerably. The vast majority of advertised building plots were suitable for the construction of a single dwelling, with only two plots in the Newtown area and one in the Aberystwyth study area suitable for multiple property construction. The sizes of plots available in each area ranged from 86 square yards to 2.5 acres, with a majority of building plots in each area totalling less than 1 000 square yards. A total of 12 plots advertised contained outline planning permission for residential development - 8 plots in the Newtown area and 4 in the Aberystwyth study area. Unfortunately, very few of these advertisements provided details of plot sizes, and so direct comparison with other plots is not possible. Mains services were provided with only one-fifth of plots, and usually involved the provision of electricity and water supply.

In short, building plots containing outline planning permission and mains services were available in only two locations within the Aberystwyth study area - a single dwelling plot in Capel Bangor priced at £30 000; and a plot for four properties in Borth (£65 000) - and in three locations within the Newtown area - Caersws (£19 500); Dolfor (£20 000); and Llanidloes (£25 000). A further seven plots were available containing outline permission for residential development but without mains service provision.

6.7 Summary

Drawing on housing research conducted mainly within the urban arena, Chapter Six has considered three important aspects of the rural housing market.

It began with a consideration of processes of production and the activities of **building companies** within each study area. It appeared that housebuilding was a small-scale industry, concerned mainly with extension, conversion and property repair work, and more limited property construction work. Involvement in new housebuilding was more pronounced in the Newtown study area - with almost three-quarters of companies having built houses over recent years, compared to only one-third of Aberystwyth firms. Around 40% of building companies had been involved in local authority housing schemes, whilst roughly half this proportion had participated in housing association projects.

In each area, recent housebuilding had been dominated by a single company within the sample - producing almost two-thirds of new houses in the Newtown study area, and 90% of Aberystwyth new properties in the 1985-90 period. The survey revealed that the vast majority of new housebuilding stemmed from individual customers contacting building companies, although five firms were involved in land purchase - usually small plots totalling less than one acre.

New constructions were characterised by larger properties - detached houses and bungalows - priced at the upper end of the price range. Only one firm had built properties aimed at first-time buyers, and two companies had constructed houses that had sold for less than £40 000. Although it is unclear whether such a pattern of new housebuilding is client-led or represents speculative development, it nevertheless remains the case that new housing in each area tended to be concentrated at the upper end of the price range.

Almost all companies expressed a willingness to be involved in low-cost housing schemes and social housing projects, with most in favour of local authority housing projects. However, only three building firms had been involved in social housing schemes, and none had participated in low-cost projects. Problems relating to the availability and cost of building land were cited by several firms as the main obstacles to

their involvement in low-cost housing schemes. Such factors, together with the difficulties associated with gaining planning permissions, were also the main operational problems cited by builders in terms of general housing work.

Intervening between landowners and building companies is the **planning system**. The role of planning regime was discussed, with the recent debate within the Aberystwyth study area used as an illustration of the demands for both 'landscape preservation' and 'homes for locals'. Within the Aberystwyth area, a hierarchical planning policy was in operation, with new housing development steered towards certain settlements. No such policy was in place within the Newtown study area, although over-development and insensitive development might result in intervention.

Each Plan encouraged sensitive developments in character with existing settlements, and the Powys Plan also considered the linguistic consequences of housing development in areas of strong Welsh language usage. In many ways, development in smaller settlements, was only permitted if it was capable of being serviced 'at reasonable cost'. In addition, a more overt policy of restricting new housing in the open countryside was in place within each study area, although exceptions would be considered for key worker accommodation. The Powys Plan also allowed for affordable housing developments in areas of proven local housing need.

Planning applications for new housing dominated submissions to each planning authority. This said, the scale and locations of proposed developments varied considerably between areas. In the Aberystwyth study area new housing developments tended to be of a smaller scale (2.3 dwellings per application) and concentrated in the larger commuter villages surrounding the Aberystwyth urban centre, whereas proposed new housebuilding in the Newtown study area averaged 3.0 dwellings per application, tended to be located in the more accessible eastern areas, and involved more larger building companies based outside the study area.

There was limited evidence to suggest that residents were taking advantage of the 1987-88 house price boom by converting redundant buildings into individual dwellings, as well as considerable conversion of dwellings into private rental bedsitter accommodation

in the Aberystwyth urban centre. Slightly less than one-tenth of all new build applications involved key worker accommodation and a request to build in the open countryside. Whether all such applications concerned genuine key worker cases or involved an element of speculative gain remains unclear, although it should be noted that 3% of new build applications in the Aberystwyth study area involved a request for reversal of a previously imposed occupancy condition. Little evidence of 'land banking' was uncovered by the survey, although 4% of new build applications in each area concerned a request for renewal of a previous permission.

In terms of the outcomes of applications, around one-third of proposed new-build developments within each study area were granted planning permission, an approval rate considerably lower than recorded for all applications. The most frequently cited reason for planning refusal - accounting for 40% of all stated refusals - related to a breach of the policy which severely restricted development in the open countryside. Such a finding illustrates the nature of the 'development-presentation' debate, with limited opportunities for residents living in the smaller, more isolated villages to gain planning permission for the construction of a new house for friends or family. Finally, the suspicion raised earlier that not all key worker applications were genuine appears to be confirmed partly by the finding that 4% of refusals (16 cases) concerned applications for key worker applications in the open countryside.

A survey of local building societies involved in financing the consumption of housing revealed that managers were unwilling to advance mortgages for certain properties, some of which - timber properties and derelict properties - may offer low-cost housing opportunities for local people. No other evidence of a reluctance to lend to certain groups or areas emerged, although the stability of employment played a part in the decision process. The average mortgage advance tended to be around 90-95% of the purchase price or valuation, with 100% advancements only available to 'professional people' on high incomes and right-to-buy purchasers.

Most managers were willing to lend on properties containing covenants which restricted future occupancy to 'local' people, although it was stated that subsequent valuations would be at a lower level. Such a finding was confirmed by a study of managers in Gwynedd (Tai Cymru, 1990b). A majority of branches had also been involved in financing social housing schemes over recent years.

Relatively little comment was provided on current housing problems within each study area, although there was general agreement that mortgage default levels had increased over recent years.

The final part of this section considered the characteristics of mortgage advance associated with two branches. In short, the number of mortgage advanced by each branch had increased considerably over recent years. Second mortgages represented the dominant form of mortgage, with first-time buyers constituting only one-fifth of customers. The high price of property within the local area was reflected in the age profile of mortgagees, with single people upto 30 years constituting only 6% of mortgagees. Joint income mortgages, not surprisingly, tended to be advanced to younger persons (40% were aged 30 years or under), and at a higher monetary level (70% involved mortgages in excess of £40 000), compared with all single income mortgages being less than £40 000.

The scales of operation of estate agents involved in the exchange of housing varied considerably, ranging from long established agricultural firms to more recently established agencies associated with a nationwide building society chain. This said, the vast majority of agencies were small-scale operations. Each estate agency dealt with the sales of property and provided valuations, and a majority also conducted structural surveys.

Valuations were made on the basis of both other agents' prices and the price of similar properties within the agency. Location played an important role in the valuation exercise, with properties in eastern parts of the Newtown study area - close to the employment centres of Newtown, Welshpool, Montgomery and Shrewsbury, and accessible to the

motorway network - tending to command higher prices. Within the Aberystwyth study area, properties located in the sub-urban areas and peri-urban villages - within easy commuting distance from the Aberystwyth employment centre - were characterised by generally higher prices. However, it could be argued that the property price differential within the study areas between 'good' and 'bad' areas was less pronounced than within urban housing markets.

It was apparent that each estate agent was involved in valuation work for building societies, with a limited number also having links with 'tame' developers. Such links between building societies, estate agents and tame developers would seem to warrant further investigation.

Within each area, properties at the extreme of the price range appeared to be characterised by the highest rates of turnover - first-time buyer properties, priced under £50 000 and located close to the main employment centres, and desirable 'character' properties, priced in excess of £100 000 and less dependent on location.

'Outsider' demand for local properties had reduced considerably in the late 1980s, although such demand had comprised 20-30% of the buyer market in the mid-1980s. Overall, estate agents estimated that around one in ten purchases during 1990 involved people moving in from outside the district. Outsider demand appeared to be greatest for 'traditional' properties, often containing land, located in open countryside close to the main employment and service centres.

More than seven out of ten recent property sales concerned existing properties, with newly built properties comprising only 13% of total sales. Only four agents dealt with private rental accommodation, with the volume of such properties increasing over recent years as more people faced difficulties selling their property. Finally, each estate agent had been involved in ex-council house sales.

Finally, a sample of newspaper advertisements revealed that each area had witnessed dramatic increases in domestic property prices across the 1980s - 142% in the Aberystwyth area and 122% within the Newtown study area. Such price increases had

been concentrated in the latter years of the 1980s, with a doubling of prices between 1985-90.

In 1990, only 8% of advertised properties with the Aberystwyth area and 10% of Newtown properties were available for less than £40 000. Such properties were available in 35% of settlements in the former area and 33% of settlements within the latter study area.

It appeared that the problem of affordability had resulted as much from the structure of the private housing stock as from recent price increases, with relatively few two-bedroom cheaper properties within each study area relative to the national (Welsh) mean.

Finally, the average asking price for building plots within each area was between £25 000-£30 000, although the size and facilities associated with each plot varied considerably. Plots containing planning permission and mains services were limited to two locations within the Aberystwyth area and four plots within the Newtown study area.

Clearly, more research is required examining the operations and interests of these key agents within the private housing market before any assessment can be made of their influence and attitudes to new housebuilding. Little evidence emerged from the individual studies highlighted above of shared or oppositional attitudes towards further housing in the countryside, although building companies were clearly against a restrictive housing market. Moreover, the influence of builders, building societies and estate agents appeared to be relatively limited, with, in many cases, agents' operations determined by customer demand.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CONSUMPTION OF HOUSING

7.1 Introduction

The case-study analysis so far has considered two main aspects of the local housing market, namely:

- (i) the rural housing market alongside recent processes of socio-economic change;
- (ii) the agents and organisations involved in the provision and allocation of rural housing.

The final survey chapter of the thesis considers the consumption of housing in each study area, based on a large-scale questionnaire survey of 400 households. Four aspects of the local housing market are considered:

- (i) the characteristics of households within the housing market - housing, lifestyle and employment circumstances;
- (ii) the changing nature of the local housing market - the effects of in- and out-movement on housing competition, and the influence of housing on population movements;
- (iii) the incidence and nature of housing 'need' within each study area;
- (iv) the attitudes of respondents towards further residential development and opinions on housing need.

7.2 Methodology

Given that one aim of the thesis has been an examination of the rural housing market within a wider, socio-economic, framework, it was considered necessary to construct a questionnaire format that was both general enough to cover a wide range of factors, and also, specific enough to home in on the finer details of housing circumstances and

attitudes. In addition, it was decided, at an early stage of the research programme, to conduct a relatively brief questionnaire schedule with a large number of households. With these two factors in mind, a questionnaire was designed composed of four main sections:

- (i) general household characteristics - relating to property type, age structure, economic position and length of residence;
- (ii) housing need - households in search of alternative accommodation;
- (iii) out-movement from resident households - both within and from the study area, the reasons for such moves and the property types moved to;
- (iv) respondents' attitudes to new housing development and their opinions on housing need within the local area.

The majority of potential responses were pre-coded on the questionnaire sheets in an attempt to simplify the process of analysis and help speed up the execution. This allowed the reduction of the questionnaire on to four pages (8 sides) of A4 paper (see Appendix C). A pilot run of the survey was undertaken with a sample of individuals which resulted in several minor changes, and an average interview length of about 15 minutes.

7.3 Sampling procedure

After considerable discussion concerning the ideal size of the household sample, it was decided to interview 200 households in each case study area - roughly 2% of total resident households in each area - in their place of usual residence. Two sampling procedures were considered:

- (i) a survey of 100-200 households in one or two communities within each study area;
- (ii) a larger number of smaller surveys conducted in several communities across each area.

The first procedure was rejected on the grounds that the internal heterogeneity of each study area made the identification of a 'typical' community - that could be used as representative of the general area - problematic. Furthermore, any consideration of the internal dynamics of each study area would necessitate a series of surveys in several communities. For these reasons, it was decided to undertake a series of smaller surveys in a selection of communities within each area which could provide a 'representative' picture of the housing situation in a range of different localities across each study area.

The next part of the sampling procedure involved an estimation of the number of households required for in the survey in each selected community. This necessitated four further stages:

(i) given that each study area represented a travel-to-work area, based on a main employment centre (Aberystwyth and Newtown), and that the survey aimed to investigate the internal dynamics of each area, it was decided to sub-divide each area into three sets of communities:

- (a) an employment or urban centre;
- (b) a series of larger, mainly accessible (peri-urban) villages;
- (c) a group of smaller, mainly remote villages.

(ii) using the 1981 Census as a base point, the proportions of resident households in each sub-group were calculated, with these proportions then being used to estimate the household sample required in each set of communities (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: The proposed and actual number of households interviewed in sub-regions of each study area

<u>Aberystwyth area</u>				
sub-region	percentage of households - 1981	target number of questionnaires	actual number of questionnaires	actual percentage of households
employment centre	49.7	99	88	44.0
larger, accessible villages	35.4	71	80	40.0
smaller, remote villages	14.9	30	32	16.0
<i>total</i>		200	200	
<u>Newtown area</u>				
sub-region	percentage of households - 1981	target number of questionnaires	actual number of questionnaires	actual percentage of households
employment centre	39.7	79	68	34.3
larger, accessible villages	39.7	79	79	39.9
smaller, remote villages	20.6	41	51	25.8
<i>total</i>		199	198	

(iii) within each sub-group, individual villages were selected to reflect the local variety of settlements, and a sample size was estimated based on individual household totals. Within the employment centre, several urban and sub-urban areas were selected (see Table 7.2 and Figures 7.1 and 7.2).

Table 7.2: The sampled settlements

<u>Aberystwyth study area</u>	
employment centre:	Aberystwyth and suburbs (88 households)
larger, accessible villages:	Borth; Bow Street; Llanfarian; Llanrhystud; Rhydyfelin; Talybont (80 households)
smaller, remote villages:	Furnace; Ponterwyd; Pontrhydfendigaid (32 households)
<u>Newtown study area</u>	
employment centre:	Newtown and suburbs (68 households)
larger, accessible villages:	Aberhafesp; Caersws; Kerry; Llandinam; Llanidloes*; Llanwnog (79 households)
smaller, remote villages:	Adfa; Bettws Cadewan; Llangurig; Manafon; Tregynon; Trefeglwys (51 households)
* a small town	

(iv) within each village, households were systematically selected in order to generate the required sample size using the Electoral Register.

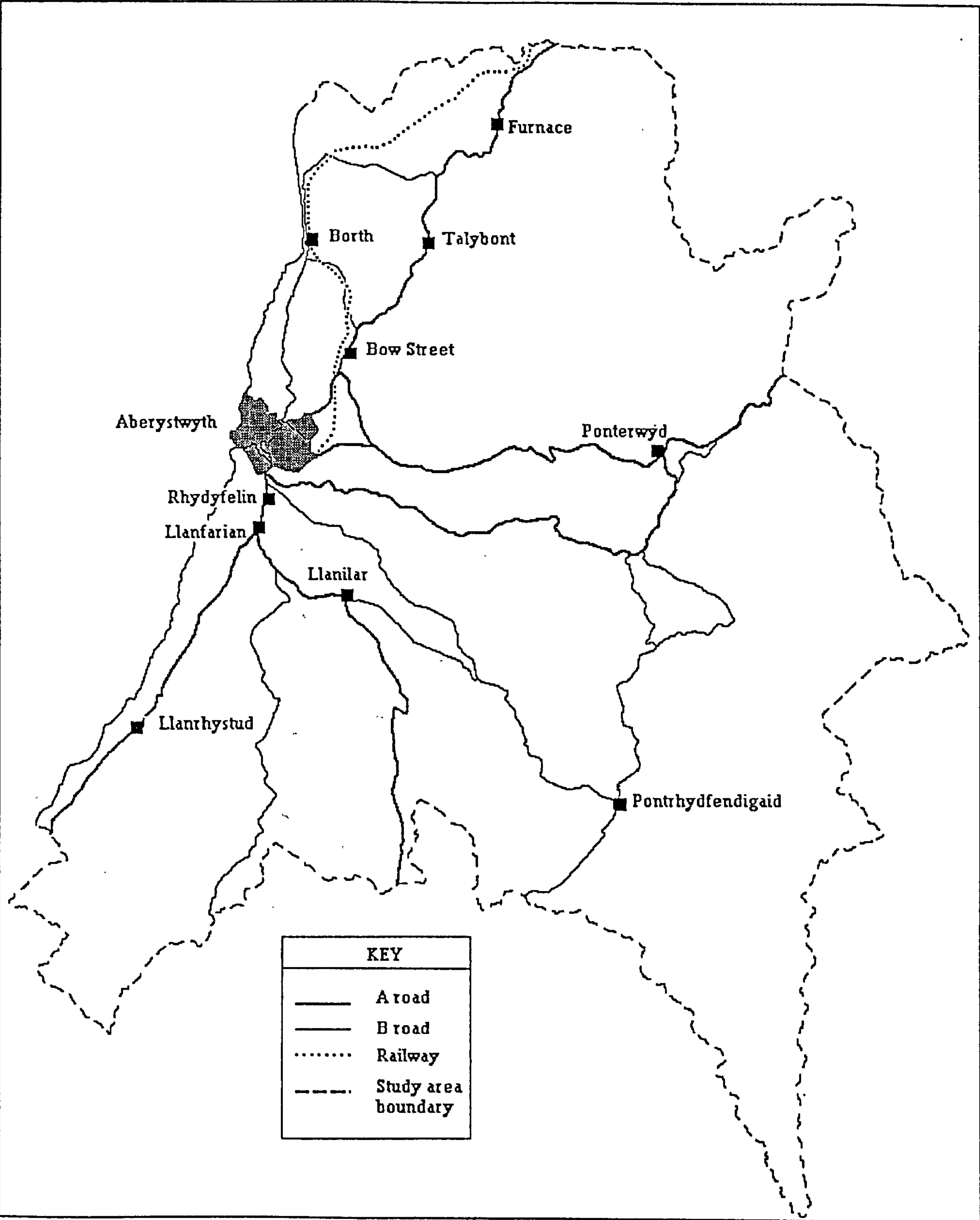


Figure 7.1: Selected communities within the Aberystwyth study area

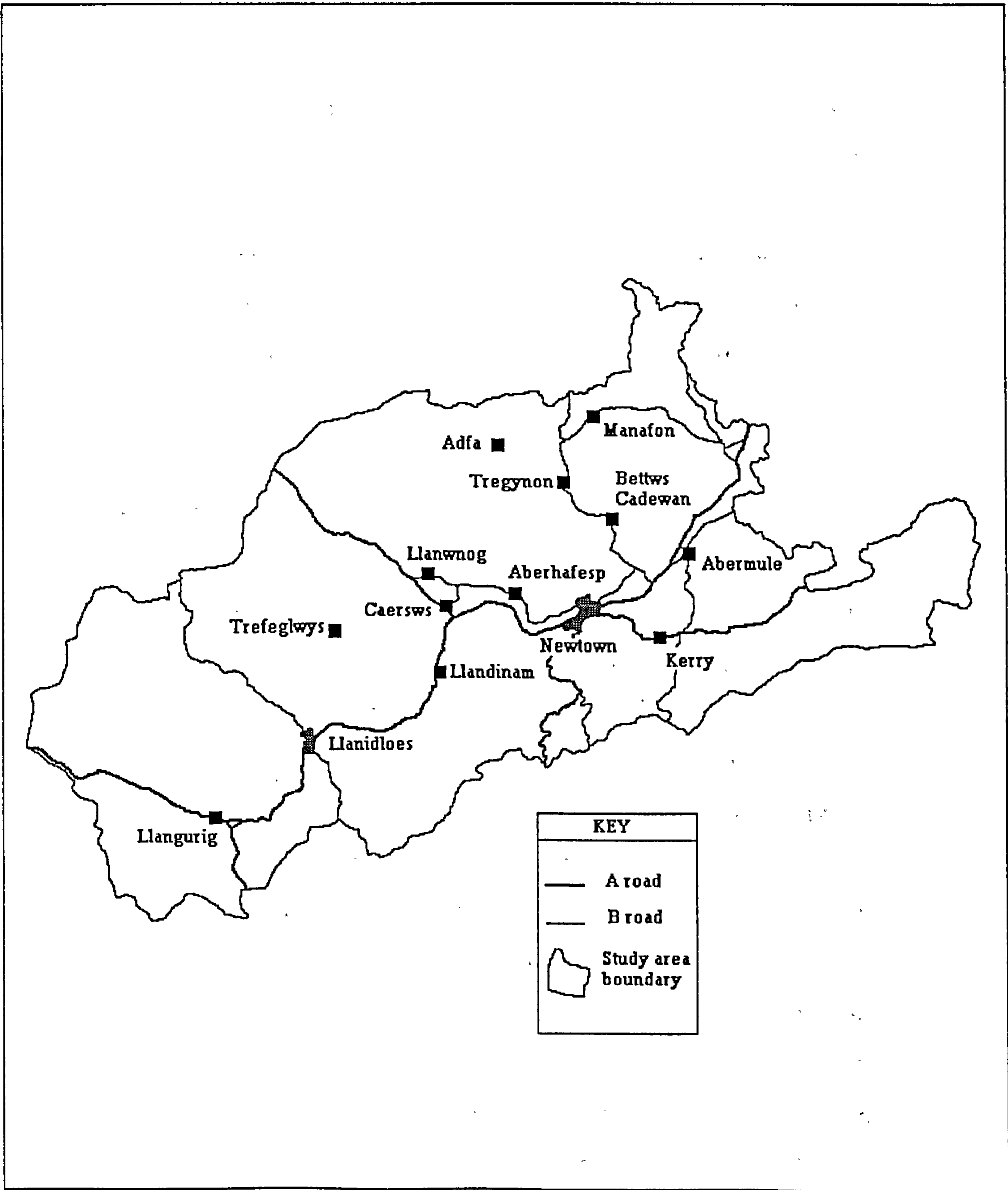


Figure 7.2: Selected communities within the Newtown study area

7.4 Questionnaire execution

The survey was undertaken in the winter months of 1990-91 and lasted for four months. In many ways, such a time of year did not prove conducive to survey work - with the twin factors of poor weather conditions and restricted daylight hours extending the time required to complete the survey. The majority of questionnaires were conducted during the working week - between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. Such a timetable inevitably excluded certain groups - for example, households in which all adult members were in full-time employment, and may have over counted others - for example, elderly persons and women staying at home with young children. Nevertheless, in terms of age structure, the sample was reasonably close to that recorded in the 1991 Census of Population (see Section 7.5).

7.5 A comparison with the 1991 Census

In each area, the generated sample was compared to the 1991 age and tenure structures recorded by the Census of Population (Tables 7.3 and 7.4). Overall, there was no significant difference between the sample structures and Census counts, although some minor ambiguities emerged. For example, the surveys within each area showed an over-estimation of children aged under 15 years, and an under-counting of young persons (aged 15-24 years). One possible explanation for such findings may be that households containing young children often had an adult member present at the time of the survey, while those households headed by or containing younger adult residents maybe more likely to be in employment during the working week. In terms of tenure comparisons, a higher proportion of property-owning households were recorded amongst the sample than in the 1991 Census. This over-estimation relates to the distinct make-up of housing stock in the selected communities within each case-study area, but also reflects the urban influence on the aggregate Census figures - outside of the urban areas, owner-occupation

accounted for 84% of Aberystwyth households and 73% of households in the Newtown study area.

Table 7.3: Age structure - a comparison with the 1991 Census (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth area</u>		<u>Newtown area</u>	
	Census	Sample	Census	Sample
under 15 years	17.6	20.9	18.3	24.8
15-24 years	13.0	8.4	15.0	8.9
25-44 years	27.9	25.0	28.2	31.5
45-59 years	17.2	16.6	17.2	15.1
60 years and over	24.5	29.1	21.3	19.7

Table 7.4: Household tenure - a comparison with the 1991 Census (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth area</u>		<u>Newtown area</u>	
	Census	Sample	Census	Sample
owner-occupied	70.8	80.5	63.9	76.8
council / new town rented	11.4	10.5	22.2	16.7
housing association rented	1.6	1.0	2.2	0.0
private rented	16.1	6.5	11.6	5.6
other / not recorded	0.0	1.5	0.0	1.0

7.6 The characteristics of households within the housing market

7.61 Introduction

The first part of the questionnaire analysis highlights three key characteristics of sampled households within each study area: household structure; property characteristics; and employment characteristics. This section should be viewed as an introduction to the more detailed analyses that follow - which cover aspects of population in-movement; out-movement; housing need; and attitudes to new housing and opinions on housing need.

7.62 Household structure

Several general observations can be made regarding the age structure of households resident in each study area. Firstly, and as has been discussed previously, each area contained relatively high proportions of 'young, family type households'. Indeed, children aged under 15 years accounted for 21% of total persons resident in the Aberystwyth area, and around one-quarter of Newtown residents - the corresponding proportion for Wales as a whole was 20%. Elderly residents were more prominent in the Aberystwyth study area - accounting for almost three out of ten persons - whilst only one-fifth of residents in the Newtown area were aged 60 years or over - the same proportion recorded for Wales as a whole. Relative to the Welsh mean, lower proportions of young persons (aged 15-24 years) were present in the sample in each study area - 8-9% compared to around 20% for the whole of Wales (although the national figure relates to 15-29 year olds). Differences between the two case-study areas in terms of age structure, in many ways, reflect those recorded by the 1991 Census - with higher proportions of young family-type households in residence in the Newtown area, and greater numbers of elderly residents living within the Aberystwyth study area.

Table 7.5: Percentage age structure of residents within the survey

	<u>Aberystwyth</u> <u>area</u>	<u>Newtown</u> <u>area</u>
under 15 years	20.9	24.8
15-24 years	8.4	8.9
25-44 years	25.0	31.5
45-59 years	16.6	15.1
60 years and over	29.1	19.7
n	464	537

Each study area had experienced a considerable influx of new households in recent years, with one-third of Aberystwyth households and slightly less than one-half of households within the Newtown study area having moved to their present residence within the last five years. Indeed, only 46% of households in the Aberystwyth area and 36% of Newtown households had resided in their current property for a period in excess of ten years.

An almost identical pattern emerged for the length of residence within the present community (here, 'community' is taken to mean the village or town of residence). Three out of ten households in the Aberystwyth sample, and one-third of households within the Newtown study area had moved to their present community during the previous five years. If the period of in-movement is extended to the last ten years, then newcomer households account for 44% and 46% of Aberystwyth and Newtown households respectively. Indeed, only about one-fifth of households resident in each study area had lived in the community for a period in excess of thirty years. Thus, it is clear that communities within each study area have witnessed a considerable reconstitution of their resident population over recent years - changes which are considered in more detail in the next two sections.

Table 7.6: Length of residence in present property and community

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	property	community	property	community
less than 1 year	5.5	4.0	9.1	4.6
1 - 5 years	29.0	24.5	37.9	28.8
6 - 10 years	18.5	14.0	17.2	12.6
11 -20 years	23.5	22.5	20.2	18.2
21 - 30 years	10.0	12.0	8.6	15.7
more than 30 years	12.5	22.0	7.1	20.2
not stated	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0

7.63 Housing characteristics

Owner-occupation represented the dominant tenure form in each study area - accounting for approximately 81% of Aberystwyth households and 77% of households resident in the Newtown study area. In each area, the proportion of home owners was greatest in the larger, accessible villages, where a majority of property owner-occupiers owned their property outright - 58% in both areas. Only 11% of households in the Aberystwyth area and 17% of Newtown households rented their dwelling from the local authority or D.B.R.W (in the case of the Newtown area), with just two households (1%) in the former area living in housing association properties. Not surprisingly, highest levels of social rental households existed in the urban areas of each study area - 16% and 28% of Aberystwyth and Newtown households respectively. Only 6% of households across both areas were living in private rented accommodation at the time of the survey, with an even geographical spread of such households across the sub-regions of each study area.

Table 7.7: Household tenure (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
owned outright	49.0	41.9
owned on mortgage	31.5	34.9
council / new town rented	10.5	16.7
housing association rented	1.0	0.0
private rented	6.5	5.6
tied accommodation	0.5	0.0
not stated	1.0	1.0
n	200	198

Within the property-owning group of households, between 6-8% had previously been council tenants and had purchased their property under the provisions of the Right-to-Buy legislation of the 1980s. The level of sales appeared to be greatest in villages outside the urban areas, accounting for 58% of such sales in the Aberystwyth area and 60% in the Newtown study area.

The structure of the housing stock in each area differed in only one major aspect. A much higher proportion of older, pre-1900 dwellings were recorded in the Aberystwyth area -



35% compared to only 17% of Newtown properties. By contrast, within the latter study area, a majority of households were residing in properties built in the post-1970 period - 53% compared with only 26% of Aberystwyth households. Within each area, the spatial distribution of new housing varied considerably. In the Aberystwyth area, for example, newer, post-1985, properties were most prominent in the suburbs of Aberystwyth, whilst more of these properties were concentrated in larger, peripheral villages within the Newtown study area. More than four out of ten households living in smaller, remote villages within the former area were residing in pre-1900 houses - a rate double that recorded in any sub-region within the Newtown study area.

Table 7.8: Property ages (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>				<u>Newtown</u>			
	total	urban area	larger access. villages	smaller remote villages	total	urban area	larger access. villages	smaller remote villages
pre-1900	34.5	29.6	36.3	43.8	18.7	16.2	20.3	19.6
1900-45	8.5	8.0	7.5	12.5	10.1	8.8	11.4	9.8
1946-60	14.0	19.3	8.8	12.5	10.6	14.7	3.8	15.7
1961-70	15.5	15.9	17.5	9.4	6.6	8.8	6.3	3.9
1971-80	13.0	6.8	22.5	6.3	29.3	45.6	20.3	21.6
1981-85	3.5	4.6	1.3	6.3	7.6	1.5	8.9	13.7
1986-90	9.5	15.9	3.8	6.3	16.2	4.4	26.6	15.7
not stated	1.5	0.0	2.5	3.1	1.0	0.0	2.5	0.0

Considerably less variation was evident in terms of the types and sizes of properties between the two study areas. Around one-fifth of households in each area were living in bungalows and were concentrated in village locations. Smaller properties, suitable for first-time buyers were relatively scarce in each study area - with only one-quarter of all properties containing one or two bedrooms. Within each area, smaller properties were concentrated in the smaller, more remote villages - accounting for more than 30% of the total housing stock in such villages. By contrast, the largest houses - containing four or more bedrooms - tended to be concentrated in the larger, more accessible villages close to the main centres of employment.

Table 7.9: Property size - number of bedrooms (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
1	2.5	1.5
2	21.5	25.3
3	55.5	55.6
4	15.5	13.6
5+	3.5	3.0
not stated	1.5	1.0

Given the emphasis on property extension and renovation in the builders survey, it is not surprising that what might be loosely termed 'gentrification' - that is, improvements to the rural housing stock - had taken place within each area. Around one-fifth of properties in the Aberystwyth area and roughly 14% of those in the Newtown study area had been renovated or received a major improvement since the present household had moved to the property. Within each area, such improvements were most prominent in the remote villages, particularly amongst older, pre-1900 houses. In addition, 14% of Aberystwyth households and 9% of those in the Newtown study area had extended their property during their period of residence. Within the former area, extensions were most prominent in the larger, peripheral villages. Other, more minor property improvements - particularly those involving the addition of a garage or porch - accounted for 4-5% of households, whilst an average of 16% of total households had fitted new windows since moving to their property.

Table 7.10: Property improvements (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
extension	14.0	9.1
renovation / improvement	20.0	14.1
new garage	4.0	5.1
new porch	4.0	5.1
new window	18.0	14.1
other	4.0	0.5

Finally, Table 7.11 highlights the main methods used by households in finding their present property. This indicates that a majority of households in each area found their current property by three main methods: estate agents (21%); word-of-mouth (22%); and through a housing authority allocation (15%). Very few households came across their present residence through a local newspaper advertisement, and still fewer through an advert in the national press.



Table 7.11: Property search (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
estate agent	19.5	23.2
word-of-mouth	25.5	18.7
allocation by local authority, housing association & DBRW	12.5	20.2
seen	9.5	6.1
local newspaper	8.0	5.6
national newspaper	0.0	1.5
business	0.0	1.5
other / not stated	25.0	23.2

7.64 Employment structure

Given the importance placed on the inter-linkages between housing and the economy within the thesis, a series of questions were included within the survey concerned with the employment characteristics of household members.

Of those residents aged 16 and over, roughly 50% within the Aberystwyth area and 56% living in the Newtown study area were economically active. Within this economically active group, a majority of workers resident in each area were engaged in full-time employment. Part-time workers accounted for approximately 23% and 26% of economically active adults in the Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas respectively, with a much higher proportion of women engaged in this type of employment. The remaining 19% of workers in the Aberystwyth area and 12% of Newtown workers were self-employed.

Retirement accounted for the majority of persons not in employment within each area - accounting for 74% of Aberystwyth 'non workers' and 66% of 'out-of-work' adults in the Newtown study area. The unemployment rate, expressed as a percentage of economically active adult residents, stood at 5.6% in the Aberystwyth area and 7.1% within the Newtown sample, with highest levels recorded within the urban areas.

Table 7.12: Percentage of adults economically active and inactive

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
<u>economically active</u>	49.6	55.9
in full-time employment	58.8	61.9
in part-time employment	22.6	25.7
self-employed	18.6	12.4
<u>economically inactive</u>	50.4	44.1
retired	73.9	65.7
seeking work	5.6	9.0
housepartner	18.9	24.1
sick / other	1.7	1.2

More than nine out of ten residents in employment in each area worked within the boundaries of the case-study area, with the vast majority of such people employed within the Aberystwyth and Newtown urban areas. Twice the proportion of resident workers in the Newtown study area were engaged in employment outside the area (8.1%) - particularly in the towns of Montgomery, Welshpool and Oswestry - than in the Aberystwyth area (4.5%).

Respondents were asked to supply an estimation of gross income levels for each working member of the household. Given the sensitive nature of this question, three precautions were taken within the questionnaire format. Firstly, it formed the final question of the survey so as not to jeopardise responses to other parts of the questionnaire. Second, respondents were advised that income data would be used to calculate generalised estimates of the affordability of housing within the case study areas, and finally, respondents were required to provide only an income range, rather than state a specific income level. Such precautions proved successful, with a response rate of 82% in the Aberystwyth area and 79% amongst respondents resident in the Newtown study area. This said, one drawback of recording income levels in this format is that it is not possible to amalgamate individual incomes to produce an overall household income figure.

The distribution of individual incomes within each area is highlighted in Table 7.13. The first point that can be made about such a distribution is that each area is characterised by

a high proportion of low incomes - with roughly 26% of workers in the Aberystwyth area and 22% of Newtown workers earning a gross income of less than £5 000 per annum. A much higher proportion of women in employment earned such low income levels - 49.1% of women workers in the Aberystwyth study area earned less than £5 000 per annum compared with only 10.5% of men, and 45.0% of Newtown women in employment earned under £5 000 compared with 6.7% of male workers.

Table 7.13: Gross income annual income levels - all persons in employment (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
less than £5 000	25.5	22.3
£5 000 - £7 499	12.4	21.1
£7 500 - £9 999	20.0	18.1
£10 000 - £14 999	21.4	27.1
£15 000 and over	20.7	11.4

Although, relatively few persons in employment earned incomes in excess of £15 000 per year in each area, it is clear that the proportion earning above such an amount was much higher in the Aberystwyth area (21%) than amongst workers in the Newtown study area (11%).

Finally, respondents were asked to provide a job title and brief description of employment for each member of the household engaged in employment, and also details of the main previous employment for retired persons within the household. Occupations were classified into 17 socio-economic groups using the O.P.C.S. Classification of Occupations.

In each area, approximately one-quarter of all persons in employment were engaged in professional and managerial occupations - an indication of the changing nature of the local economy. Intermediate non-manual and personal services accounted for the highest proportion of workers - 37% in the Aberystwyth area and 39% of persons in employment within the Newtown study area. The decline of the agricultural industry within each area is illustrated by the fact that only 9% of present or previous workers in each study area were engaged in farming-related occupations.

Table 7.14: Classification of occupations - persons in employment and retired persons (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
professional and managerial	25.4	24.0
intermediate non-manual	36.6	39.0
skilled manual	9.7	12.5
semi-skilled manual	10.0	9.3
unskilled manual	6.1	3.8
farming	9.7	9.3

7.7 In-movement and the local housing market

7.71 Introduction

The intensity of recent population in-movement to each study area has been highlighted elsewhere in the thesis (Chapter Four). Figures taken from the 1991 Census indicated that a large proportion of in-movers were English, with more limited evidence suggesting an in-migration of young family-type households to each study area. This section investigates the process of population in-movement in greater detail, and considers three main aspects of such movement:

- (i) the intensity of recent processes of in-movement;
- (ii) the characteristics of in-movement - motivation for moving, previous place of residence;
- (iii) the characteristics of in-movers - age structure, housing circumstances and economic position.

7.72 The scale of in-movement

The intensity of recent population in-movement was discussed in earlier sections. In short, within the total sample, 44% of resident households in the study areas had moved to their present community (town or village) within the previous ten year period. For the purposes of this section such households will be termed 'newcomers' or 'movers', whilst the remaining 54% of households will be referred to as 'locals' or 'stayers'. Although it is recognised that such a dichotomy is crude, it is felt that it is nevertheless capable of indicating the nature of recent in-movement within each study area.

Within the Aberystwyth area, 'newcomers' accounted for around 44% of all households, whilst roughly 46% of households in the Newtown area had resided in their communities for less than ten years. In each area, the vast majority of newcomer households had moved to their present community within the preceding five year period, that is between

1985-90. In the Aberystwyth area, for example, around 30% of households had moved since 1985, compared to only 14% who had relocated in the 1981-85 period, Likewise, one-third of Newtown newcomers had relocated within the last five years, compared to just 13% who had moved during the first half of the decade.

7.73 The characteristics of in-movement

A key difference between in-movement to each study area concerns the distance moved by newcomer households. In short, a much higher proportion of in-moving households currently residing within the Newtown study area had relocated from locations outside the study area boundaries. For example, 63% of newcomer households in the Newtown area had moved from outside the area, compared to only 46% of such households residing within the Aberystwyth study area. Such variation in patterns of in-movement is clearly evident from Table 7.15, which highlights the distances moved by newcomers to each study area. Around 45% of newcomers residing in the Newtown study area had moved over 20 miles to their present place of residence, compared to only 31% of in-movers within the Aberystwyth area. Indeed, 32% of Newtown newcomer households had previously resided in locations situated more than 50 miles from the study area. Short distance moves - of less than 5 miles - accounted for roughly 44% of newcomer relocations within the Aberystwyth study area - a much higher proportion than recorded amongst the Newtown sample (32%).

Table 7.15: Distance moved by newcomers in each study area (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
0-5 miles	43.5	31.9
6-10 miles	14.1	12.1
11-20 miles	9.4	6.6
21-50 miles	4.7	13.2
over 50 miles	25.9	31.9
not stated	2.4	4.4

Regarding relocations within each study area, almost two-thirds of internal household moves involved relocations from villages to (sub-)urban areas, and also inter-village relocations. The remaining one-third of newcomer households had moved from the urban centre to outlying villages within each study area.

The previous places of residence of newcomer households moving from outside each study area are highlighted in Figures 7.3 and 7.4. It is evident from these maps that a much higher proportion of such newcomers within the Newtown area had moved from areas outside Wales - 61% compared to 44% of Aberystwyth in-movers. In addition, 5% of outsider newcomer households resident within the Newtown area had moved from Scotland.

Almost half of newcomer households within the Aberystwyth area who had moved from outside Wales between 1981-90 had relocated from locations in the South East of England, with a further one-fifth of such households moving from the West Midlands. The remaining five households that had moved from England had previously resided in the counties of Devon, Dorset, South Yorkshire and Derbyshire (2).

English in-movement to the Newtown study area was geographically more varied in nature. This said, the same two regions that dominated in-movement to the Aberystwyth area were also the most important in terms of in-movement to the Newtown area - with 29% moving from the South East and 27% relocating from areas of the West Midlands. The remaining 44% of English newcomers had moved from 13 different counties - ranging from Cumbria to Devon, and Merseyside to Norfolk.

Finally, with regard to the types of places moved from, one-third of English newcomers within the Aberystwyth area and roughly 30% of Newtown English newcomers had relocated from urban and sub-urban areas within metropolitan counties.

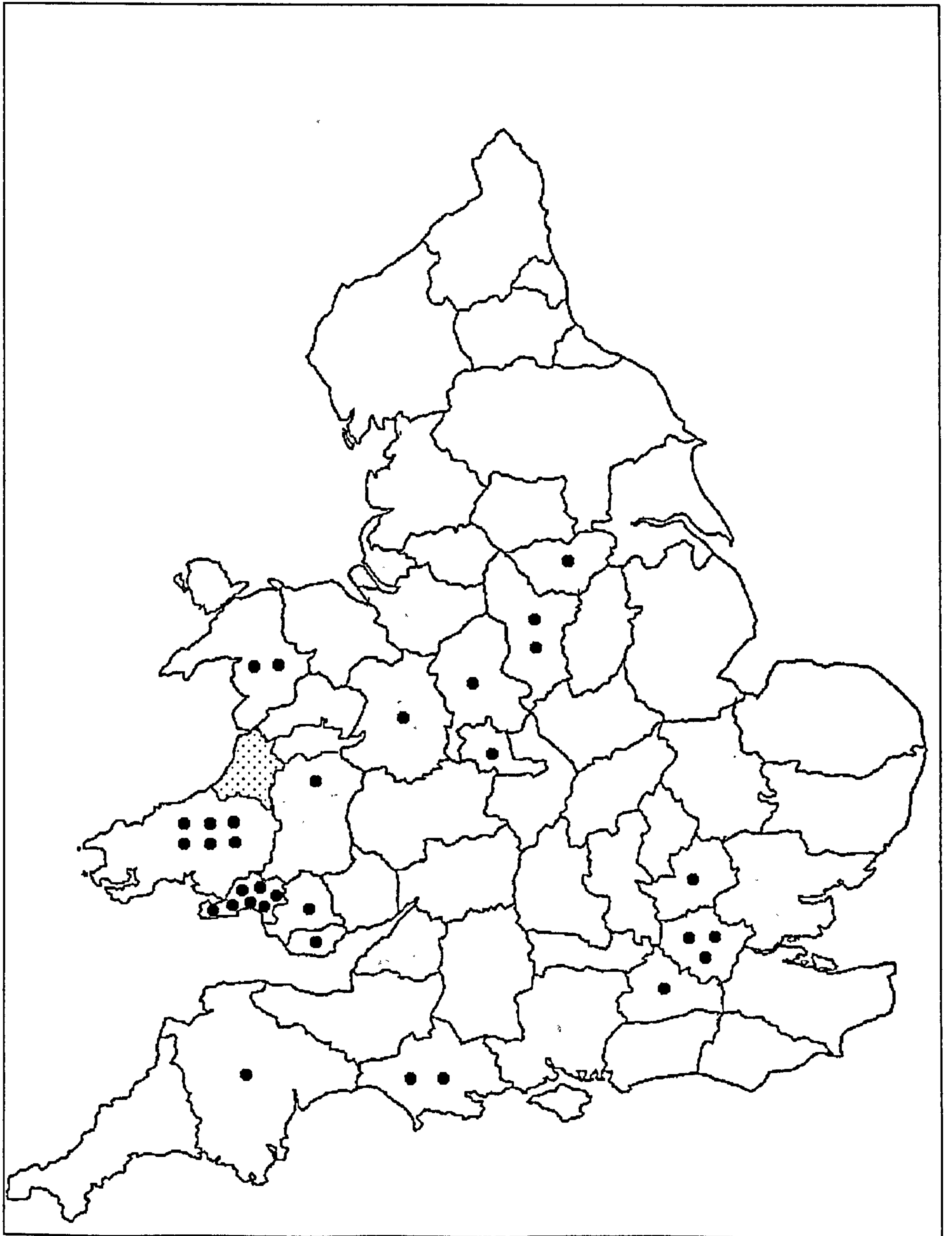


Figure 7.3: Previous place of residence of movers to the Aberystwyth study area

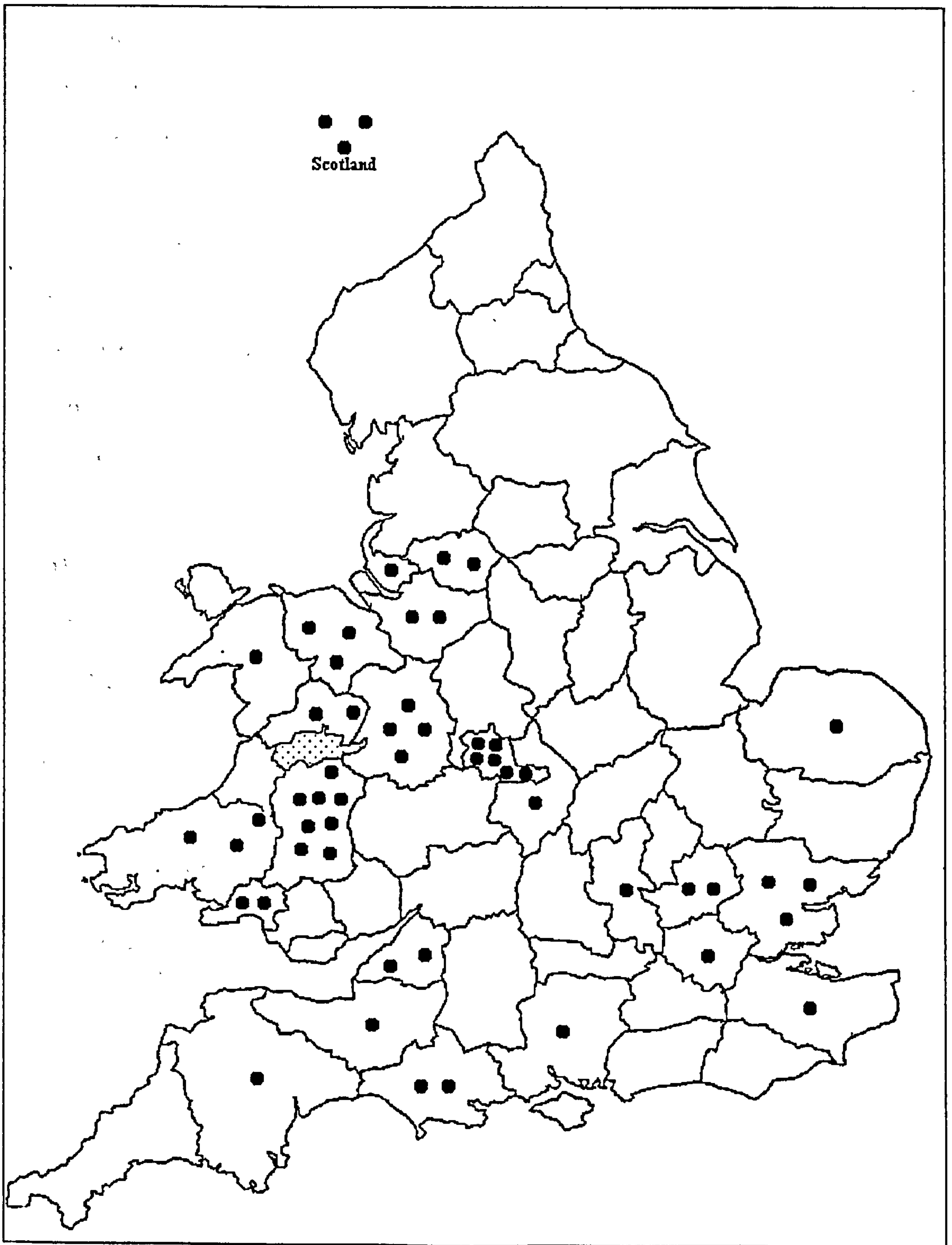


Figure 7.4: Previous place of residence of movers to the Newtown study area

7.74 Motivations behind in-movement

Respondents who had moved from outside each study area within the last ten years were questioned about their main motivation for moving to the region of rural Wales. The most dominant factor involved in the decision to relocate to each study area was employment - with around 37% of newcomer households in each area moving to take up a new job within the study area (predominantly relating to the male main earner within the household). Other important reasons underpinning relocation to the study areas were retirement and return migration (usually linked) - which accounted for 12% of moves to the Newtown area and 28% of such moves to the Aberystwyth study area; proximity to friends or relatives (18% and 14% respectively); and aesthetic or environmental reasons - a move to an area of attractive countryside - which accounted for 7% of Aberystwyth outsider movers and 10% households that had moved to the Newtown area during the last ten years. It is interesting to note at this point that only three in-moving respondents - one in the Aberystwyth area and two Newtown respondents - stated that housing was the main factor behind in-movement.

Table 7.16: Reason for moving to each study area (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
employment	37.9	36.7
return migration	27.6	6.1
close to friends / relatives	13.8	18.4
pleasant countryside	6.9	10.2
marriage / moved with parents	6.9	6.1
retirement	0	6.1
housing	3.4	4.1
area of past holiday	0.0	6.1
escape urban lifestyle	0.0	4.1
education	3.4	0.0
personal	0.0	2.0

7.75 The factors behind in-movement to a particular community

Newcomer respondents - both from within and outside of each study area - were questioned about their motivations for moving to their present community. Within each area, housing appeared to represent the main factor influencing movement to a particular community, although within such a category, a whole host of 'push' and 'pull' factors were stated by respondents. For example, several households had moved to specific places because they offered lower-cost, first-time buyer housing opportunities. Other households with sufficient capital - either in the form of financial or property capital - were permitted a wider choice of locations.

A much higher proportion of motivations underpinning in-movement to an individual community were unrelated to employment factors. For example, only 8% of in-moving households within the Aberystwyth area and 13% of such Newtown households had relocated to their present community for job-related reasons. Other important factors behind community selection within each study area were the attractiveness of the immediate environs and proximity to friends or relatives.

Table 7.17: Reason for moving to specific communities in each area (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
housing	38.8	30.6
pleasant environment	17.5	20.0
close to friends / relatives	12.5	10.6
employment	7.5	12.9
retirement	6.3	4.7
return migration	6.3	2.4
marriage / moved with parents	2.5	10.6
nearer services	2.5	2.4
personal / health	5.0	4.7
area of past holiday	0.0	1.2

7.76 The characteristics of in-movers

Given the dominance of employment-based in-movement to the study areas, it is not surprising that more than eight out of ten newcomers within each study area were aged

below 60 years of age. Indeed, relative to those persons who had been resident within their community for more than ten years, the age structure of the newcomer sample was considerably more 'youthful'. A much higher proportion of the newcomer group consisted of 'younger family type' households - households containing persons aged 25-44 years and children aged under 15 years. In the Aberystwyth area, for example, 35% of newcomers were aged 25-44 years and 30% were aged under 15 years, compared to only 15% and 12% of locals respectively. Similarly, 36% of Newtown newcomers were aged 25-44 years and 34% were children aged below 15 years, whilst such age groups constituted only 26% and 15% respectively of locals.

Table 7.18: Age structure of 'newcomers' and 'locals' (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
0-14 years	30.3	12.3	34.2	14.9
15-24 years	5.7	11.0	6.2	11.8
25-44 years	35.1	15.3	36.4	26.2
45-59 years	11.8	21.2	9.1	21.3
60 years and over	17.1	40.3	14.2	25.9

7.77 Housing circumstances

Around three-quarters of newcomer households resident in the Aberystwyth area and 78% of such Newtown newcomer households were owner-occupiers. Within the latter area, such a level of home ownership was almost identical to that recorded amongst local households, whilst in the Aberystwyth study area, owner-occupation amongst local households was at a considerably higher rate (86%). A greater proportion of newcomer households in each area owned their property on mortgage - presumably a reflection of a more youthful age structure.

Around 11% of Aberystwyth newcomers and 14% of such households within the Newtown study area were living in social rental housing. Greater numbers of newcomer households were residing in private rental accommodation - although such housing

accounted for only 8% of Newtown in-movers and 12% of newcomer households in the Aberystwyth study area.

Table 7.19: The tenure of newcomer and local households (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	locals	newcomers	locals	newcomers
owned on mortgage	64.6	29.4	50.5	31.9
owned outright	21.2	45.9	25.2	46.2
council / new town	10.6	10.6	18.7	14.3
rented				
housing association	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0
rented				
private rented	2.7	11.8	3.7	7.7
not recorded	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0

Within the Aberystwyth area, a higher proportion of newcomer households occupied both the oldest and newest properties - 34% were living in pre-1900 houses and 27% were residing in properties built in the post-1980 period. Further, greater numbers of newcomers were living in bungalows - the dominant form of newly built property - relative to the general population.

More than 40% of newcomer households residing in the Newtown study area occupied properties constructed between 1981-90, with 32% of such households living in post-1985 properties. Newcomers residing in older, pre-1900 houses totalled only half those recorded in the Aberystwyth area - a reflection of the property structure within each area. Over two-thirds of Newtown newcomers were living in either detached houses or bungalows, with slightly less than one-quarter residing in properties containing at least four bedrooms. Only 11% of locals were living in such properties.

Table 7.20: Property ages - newcomers and locals (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
pre-1900	35.4	34.1	20.6	16.5
1900-45	8.0	9.4	12.2	7.7
1946-60	19.5	7.1	16.8	3.3
1961-70	20.4	9.4	10.3	2.2
1971-80	13.3	12.9	31.8	26.4
1981-85	0.0	8.2	3.7	12.1
1986-90	2.7	18.8	2.8	31.9
not stated	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0

7.78 Employment structure

Within the Aberystwyth study area around 58% of newcomer households were economically active - a much higher proportion than that recorded amongst the local population (38%). A gender breakdown of economic activity rates reveals that a much higher proportion of newcomer men were involved in employment (70%) than women (49%), with the newcomer-local economic activity differential much greater amongst men (70/43%) than women (49/33%). Three-quarters of male newcomers in employment were engaged in full-time occupations - a slightly higher proportion than recorded amongst locals. A further one-fifth of male incomer workers were self-employed, compared to only 17% of local male newcomers in employment. Less variation was evident between newcomer and local women in employment, with roughly 35% engaged in full-time work, 45% in part-time employment, and one-fifth self-employed.

Within the Newtown study area, roughly half of both newcomer and local residents were economically active. Again, higher proportions of men than women were in paid employment, with the economic activity rate highest amongst incomer male workers. However, the economic activity rate amongst women newcomers was less than that recorded for local female residents - 36% compared to 46%. The vast majority of male newcomer workers were engaged in full-time employment, with around 47% of incomer women in employment engaged in such work. Again, a higher proportion of both newcomer men and women in employment were self-employed.

Table 7.21: Male employment - newcomers and locals (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
full-time	75.6	72.2	70.9	76.1
part-time	4.4	11.1	5.5	10.9
self-employed	20.0	16.7	23.6	13.0
<i>economic activity</i>	70.3	43.4	64.7	56.1

Table 7.22: Female employment - newcomers and locals (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
full-time	35.0	36.4	46.7	34.1
part-time	45.0	45.5	46.7	63.6
self-employed	20.0	18.2	6.7	2.2
economic activity	48.8	33.3	35.7	46.3

A summary of an occupational breakdown of residents in employment, and the main previous occupation of retired persons is presented in Tables 7.23 and 7.24. In short, within each study area, a higher proportion of both male and female newcomers were engaged in professional and managerial occupations, whilst greater numbers of locals (those resident for more than 10 years) were employed in manual work. A higher proportion of local male workers were (or had been) engaged in farming and related employment within each study area, although the reverse situation was evident amongst Newtown newcomer and local female workers.

Table 7.23: Occupational classification of newcomers and locals - male workers (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
professional & managerial	44.1	36.0	38.6	14.3
intermediate non-manual	16.9	14.7	22.9	24.7
manual	30.5	37.3	28.9	40.0
farming	3.4	4.0	3.6	4.7
other / inadequately described	5.1	8.0	4.8	5.9

Table 7.24: Occupational classification of newcomers and locals - female workers (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>		<u>Newtown</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
professional & managerial	14.3	13.2	20.4	28.2
intermediate non-manual	60.7	57.4	55.1	58.7
manual	12.5	19.1	8.2	15.9
farming	7.1	7.4	8.2	4.8
other / inadequately described	5.4	2.9	8.2	6.3

7.79 Income levels

Within the Newtown study area more than one quarter of male newcomers in employment earned incomes in excess of £15 000 per year, compared to only 11% of such locals. Likewise, in terms of female earnings, one-quarter of women newcomer workers earned salaries of more than £10 000 per annum, whilst only 6% of local women earned such incomes. Conversely, a much higher proportion of the local workforce earned low incomes. In fact, 11% of local men in employment earned less than £5 000 per annum compared with only 4% of newcomer men, whilst more than twice as many local women than newcomers earned below such a figure.

Table 7.25: Gross annual income levels of newcomers and locals in employment by gender - Newtown study area (percentages)

	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
less than £5 000	3.9	10.5	25.0	60.6
£5 000 - £7 499	7.8	15.8	35.7	21.2
£7 500 - £9 999	23.5	15.8	14.3	12.1
£10 000 - £14 999	37.3	47.4	21.4	3.0
£15 000 and over	27.5	10.5	3.6	3.0

An identical income pattern emerged within the Aberystwyth area, with newcomer workers of both sexes earning higher wages than locals. Around 41% of male newcomers earned above £15 000 per year compared to only 24% of locals, whilst 16% of women newcomers earned more than £10 000 per annum compared to 11% of such local women. In terms of low incomes, higher proportions of local workers again earned salaries of less than £5 000 per year - 21% of male locals earned below such an income compared to only 2% of newcomers, whilst the corresponding proportions for women were 58% and 42%.

Table 7.26: Gross annual income levels of newcomers and locals in employment by gender - Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
	newcomers	locals	newcomers	locals
less than £5 000	2.4	20.6	41.9	57.7
£5 000 - £7 499	7.1	5.9	9.7	15.4
£7 500 - £9 999	21.4	14.7	32.3	15.4
£10 000 - £14 999	28.6	35.3	12.9	7.7
£15 000 and over	40.5	23.5	3.2	3.9

7.8 Out-movement and the housing market

7.81 Introduction

In Chapter Two mention was made of the fact that, whilst many areas of rural Wales had witnessed dramatic rates of net in-movement in recent years, there still existed an exodus of younger residents from these areas. Very little research has been undertaken in the last ten or so years which has looked at the issue of out-movement from areas of the British countryside. Within much of the policy and media discussion of rural housing problems, however, there is an assumed link between out-movement of young people and the lack of affordable housing in the countryside. Such statements have, in the main, been based on piecemeal, anecdotal evidence, and have tended to be restricted to the more 'pressurised' southern areas of rural England.

This section attempts to examine the links between out-movement and the local housing market. Respondents were asked to provide details of individuals who had moved out of the household in the preceding ten year period. Although such a method of investigation contains obvious drawbacks, in that it involves 'second-hand' information and possibly neglects more sensitive out-movements - for example, those involving family disputes or personal problems - it is felt that the information generated provides a useful insight into the nature of out-movement from these two growth areas in the Welsh countryside.

Five key aspects of out-movement are addressed:

- (i) the incidence and age characteristics of out-migration;
- (ii) the reasons behind out-movement;
- (iii) the destinations of movers;
- (iv) the property characteristics of persons moving from rural Wales;
- (v) the factors that might have kept out-movers within rural Wales.

The survey revealed that, across both areas, 72 households (18%) had witnessed at least one person leaving the household within the last ten years - 23% of households within

the Aberystwyth area and 13% of those living in the Newtown study area. This marked variation in levels of out-movement reflects differences within each area's age structure. In the Aberystwyth area, for example, 46% of residents were aged 45 years and over - the age cohort most likely to have experienced the out-movement of a young person - compared to a corresponding proportion of only 35% in the Newtown study area.

Considerable variation existed between the two case study areas in terms of the distances associated with out-movement. Within the Aberystwyth study area, around six out of ten persons who had left resident households in the preceding ten year period had moved out of rural Wales, compared to only 28% within the Newtown area. Indeed, 62% of Newtown out-movers remained within the study area, in contrast to the situation in the Aberystwyth study area where only 35% of such persons stayed within the boundaries of the area.

7.82 Movements out of rural Wales

Out-movement to areas outside of rural Wales was overwhelmingly dominated by young people. In the Aberystwyth area, the age of persons moving out of the region ranged from 16-26 years, with the average age of out-movement being 20 years. Similarly, an age range of 17-21 years was recorded in the Newtown study area, with the mean age of out-movement being 19 years. In each area, no gender differences were evident in terms of either the incidence or age of out-movement.

Regarding the destinations of these longer distance moves, the vast majority involved relocations to either major conurbations or areas immediately surrounding large towns and cities. For example, within the Aberystwyth study area, 20% of moves were to London, and a further 17% involved relocations to Cardiff, whilst half of Newtown out-migration involved these two cities. Overall, around 41% of persons leaving the

Aberystwyth study area had moved to major conurbations within the South-East of England (Figures 7.5 and 7.6).

In each area, the dominant reason stated for moving out of rural Wales was employment - accounting for half of all reasons amongst Newtown out-movers, and 56% of out-movement from the Aberystwyth study area. Relocations relating to further or higher education accounted for a further 36% of moves from the Aberystwyth area and 13% of all 'out-region' moves from the Newtown study area. Thus, it can be seen that the twin factors of employment and education were responsible for more than 90% of moves to areas outside rural Wales within the Aberystwyth area, and almost two-thirds of such moves emanating from the Newtown study area. In addition, it can be suggested that many of those young people who had moved out of the region in order to enter into further education will not return to either the study area or rural Wales, since high quality, well paid job opportunities are restricted within many areas of the region.

Table 7.27: Reasons stated for persons leaving rural Wales (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
employment	55.6	50.0
further / higher education	36.1	12.5
marriage	2.8	12.5
personal	2.8	12.5
other / not stated	2.8	12.5

The vast majority of respondents in households where a person had moved out of rural Wales were of the opinion that, failing major infrastructural investment (economic and service based) in the local area, nothing could have prevented such out-movement. It was felt by many of these respondents that it was somehow inevitable that highly educated young people would have to leave the study area in order to secure high quality, well paid employment, and would possibly return to the area only in later life. Around one-quarter of respondents considered that a combination of improved employment and housing opportunities, together with better social facilities might have kept the household out-mover within the local area.



Figure 7.5: Destinations of movers from the Aberystwyth study area

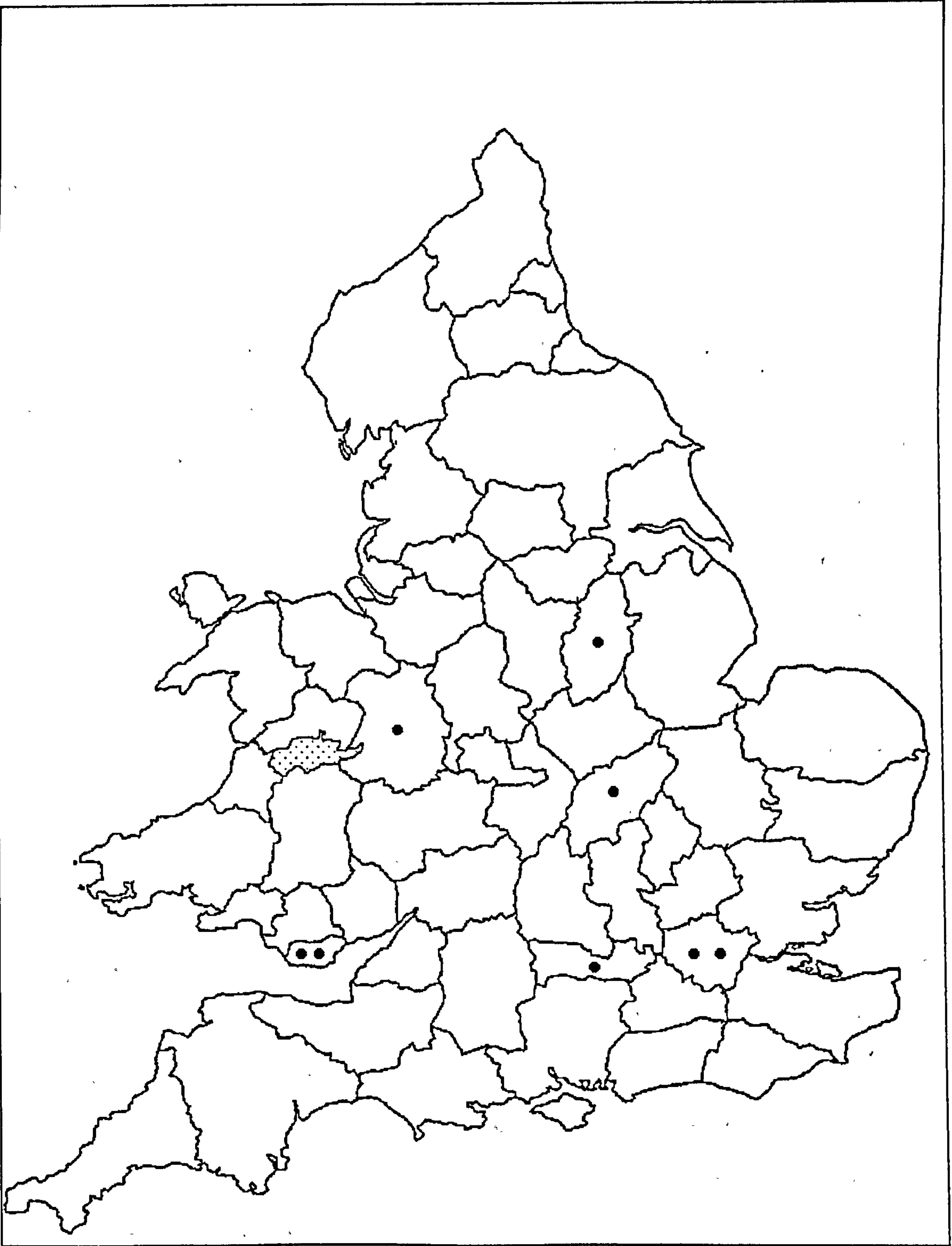


Figure 7.6: Destinations of movers from the Newtown study area

Table 7.28: Factors stated that might have kept such persons within the local area (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
no factors	63.9	62.5
improved employment opportunities	16.7	12.5
improved social facilities	5.6	0.0
improved employment and housing	2.8	0.0
improved employment and social facilities	0.0	12.5
not stated	11.1	12.5

7.83 Out-movement within rural Wales

Whilst out-movement to areas within rural Wales was also dominated by young people, the age of such movement was marginally greater than amongst the previous group of out-migrants. Within the Aberystwyth area, for example, the age of persons moving out of households to other locations within rural Wales ranged from 16-40 years, with the average age of out-movement being 22 years, whilst the mean age of out-movement within the Newtown study area was 23 years, with a range of 18-33 years. The corresponding average age of out-movement for persons leaving rural Wales was 20 years in each study area.

In terms of the destinations of 'within region' movements, roughly 82% of Newtown household out-movers and almost seven out of ten such movers within the Aberystwyth study area had relocated to places within the boundaries of each study area.

The Aberystwyth study area - almost all movers from the Aberystwyth urban and suburban areas remained within this part of the study area. Around one-fifth of movers from larger, accessible villages had moved to the urban area, with a further one third relocating within their original village and the other 46% of movers relocating to places outside the study area. Three-quarters of moves from smaller, remote villages involved other villages within the study area.

Table 7.29: Destinations of 'intra-region' out-movers - Aberystwyth study area

<i>Area of origin</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Movers</i>
<u>Aberystwyth (sub)urban areas</u>	Aberystwyth urban areas	9
	town outside study area	1
<u>larger, accessible villages</u>	Aberystwyth urban areas	3
	same village	5
	village outside study area	2
	town outside study area	5
<u>smaller, remote villages</u>	same village	1
	village within study area	2
	town outside study area	1

The Newtown study area - only half of movers from the Newtown urban and suburban areas remained within this part of the study area, with a further 40% of such persons relocating to places outside the study area. Within the larger, accessible villages, almost 80% of movers remained within the village of residence. The two movers from smaller, remote villages relocated to the Newtown and Llanidloes urban areas.

Table 7.30: Destinations of 'intra-region' out-movers - Newtown study area

<i>Area of origin</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Movers</i>
<u>Newtown (sub)urban areas</u>	Newtown urban areas	5
	village within study area	1
	town within study area	2
	town outside study area	1
	village outside study area	1
<u>larger, accessible villages</u>	same village	7
	Newtown urban areas	1
	town outside study area	1
<u>smaller, peripheral villages</u>	Newtown urban areas	1
	town within study area	1

In each area, the most prominent reason stated for such movement was marriage - accounting for 45% of Aberystwyth moves and 85% of relocations within the Newtown study area. The desire for 'independence' - 'wanting my own place' - represented the next most significant influences behind movements - 21% of relocations in the Aberystwyth area and 10% of Newtown out-movers. Within the former area, a further 21% of moves

related to new employment and 7% involved a move associated with a further education course.

Table 7.31: Reasons stated for 'intra-region' out-movement (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
marriage	44.8	85.7
employment	20.7	0.0
own place / independence	20.7	9.5
education	6.9	0.0
other / not stated	6.9	4.8

In terms of the characteristics of property moved to by such persons, only 21% of the Aberystwyth intra-region movers had purchased property - less than half the proportion recorded in the Newtown study area (57%). Private rentals represented the dominant form of tenure within the Aberystwyth area - accounting for 41% of moves compared to only 19% in the Newtown study area. Finally, slightly less than one-quarter of Aberystwyth movers and 19% of such persons within the Newtown area had relocated to either council or new town rental accommodation.

Table 7.32: Tenure of property moved to by 'intra-region' out-movers (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
owner-occupied	20.7	57.1
council / new town rented	24.1	19.1
private rented	41.4	19.1
not stated	13.8	4.8

The dominance of the private rental sector amongst Aberystwyth movers was reflected in the types of properties - with 38% of movers relocating to flats compared to only 14% amongst movers in the Newtown study area. Finally, the fact that virtually all of these private rental moves concerned young single people and childless couples is reflected in the sizes of properties moved to, with one-third of Newtown movers and 55% of movers within the Aberystwyth study area relocating to relatively smaller properties containing only one or two bedrooms.

Table 7.33: Size of property moved to by 'intra-region' out-movers (percentages)

	<u>Aberystwyth</u>	<u>Newtown</u>
1 -2 bedrooms	55.1	33.3
3 bedrooms	20.7	28.6
4+ bedrooms	0.0	14.3

7.9 Housing need

7.91 Introduction

The development of 'local needs' housing schemes was discussed in Chapter Three of the thesis. New planning guidance issued by the Welsh Office allows for the development of covenanted 'low-cost' housing for local people on village edges in cases where a proven local need can be demonstrated. However, considerable confusion remains surrounding the definition of both 'local' and 'need', with different definitions adopted in different local plans. Furthermore, discussion of local needs policies in Chapter One led to a questioning of both the success and the ethical basis of such policies. The vast majority of local needs surveys to date have tended to involve a measurement of households seeking alternative accommodation.

This section considers the incidence and nature of housing need in each study area and attempts to differentiate between a normative definition of housing 'need' and 'lifestyle' relocations.

7.92 Persons looking for alternative accommodation

Across both study areas, 49 households (12%) contained at least one person looking for alternative accommodation - 24 households within the Aberystwyth area (12%) and 25 Newtown households (13%). A majority of such moves in each area involved the entire household, whilst one-fifth of Aberystwyth moves and 36% of such persons in the Newtown area consisted of young people looking to leave the parental home. Respondents were also asked to state the likelihood of at least one person leaving the household within the next five years. Although many found such a question difficult to answer, a total of 38 respondents in the Aberystwyth area (19%) and 17% of Newtown resident respondents considered it likely that at least one person currently within the household would require alternative accommodation within five years.

The following section examines the characteristics of households seeking accommodation within each study area:

The Aberystwyth area - around six out of ten households searching for alternative housing were looking for property to purchase - a proportion considerably lower than the level of owner-occupation within the study area. Social housing (council and housing association rentals) represented the preferred tenure for a further 22% of households actively seeking alternative housing, whilst 13% were looking for private rented accommodation.

The dominant types of housing being sought were two- and three-bedroom houses and bungalows, with two households looking for one-bedroom flats, and another wanting to buy a seven-bedroom detached house. Only one household was searching for a building plot in order to self-build a property.

Table 7.34: Characteristics of preferred property - Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

<u>Tenure</u>		<u>Bedrooms</u>		<u>Type</u>	
looking to buy	60.9	1	8.7	detached house	25.0
looking to social rent	21.7	2	34.8	bungalow	20.8
looking to private rent	13.0	3	30.4	house (general)	25.0
looking to general rent	4.4	4+	21.8	flat	8.3
not stated	4.4	no preference	4.4	detached house/bungalow	4.2
		not stated	4.4	terraced house/flat	4.2
				self-build	4.2
				small-holding	4.2
				not stated	4.2

The reasons stated for relocation are highlighted in Table 7.35. Around one-quarter of household moves were related to an increase in the household size, with a further 13% wanting the increased independence that a move to their 'own place' would bring. Two elderly households were looking for retirement bungalows, with a further two households stating that they were seeking other accommodation due to poor housing conditions. It should be noted, however, that none of these respondents expressed any strong emotions concerning their present housing conditions, nor did any consider themselves to be in housing 'need'.

Table 7.35: Reasons stated for seeking alternative housing - Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

increased family size	25.0
'want to own'	12.5
more pleasant environment	4.2
retirement	8.3
poor housing condition	8.3
closer to family	4.2
marriage	4.2
employment	0.0
nearer services	0.0
other / not stated	33.3

Five households were registered on the local housing authority waiting list, with two of these households also on a housing association list. Three households had been registered on the waiting list for less than 12 months, whilst the remaining two had been 'waiting' for between 1-5 years.

The maximum affordable prices and rentals stated by respondents are shown in Table 7.35. Almost 60% of households looking for property to purchase were willing to pay a maximum price of £60 000. This said, two households (17%) were searching for houses priced in excess of £80 000. In terms of rentals, no household was prepared to pay more than £60 per week for a property, with half stating that they could only afford a weekly rent of up to £30.

Table 7.36: Maximum affordable price of property - Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

<u>Purchase price</u>		<u>Rental</u>	
up to £40 000	8.3	up to £30 per week	50.0
£41 000 - £50 000	50.0	£31 - £40 per week	0.0
£51 000 - £60 000	8.3	£41 - £50 per week	25.5
£61 000 - £80 000	16.7	£51 - £60 per week	25.5
over £80 000	16.7		

Finally, Table 7.37 provides a synopsis of the preferred locations of households looking for alternative accommodation. Whilst interpretation of this table is difficult, one point that can be made is that 60% of resident household potential movers in the Aberystwyth urban area and half of those in larger, accessible villages wished to remain within their respective urban area or village, whilst three-quarters of such households resident in smaller, remote villages were looking to move to urban areas.

Table 7.37: Preferred locations of households looking for alternative accommodation - Aberystwyth study area (percentages)

<i>current location</i>	<i>preferred location</i>	<i>number of movers</i>
Aberystwyth (sub)urban areas	Aberystwyth urban areas	6
	village within study area	4
larger, accessible villages	same village	5
	village within study area	1
	town outside study area	2
	no preference	1
smaller, remote villages	Aberystwyth urban areas	2
	village within study area	1
	town outside study area	1

The Newtown area - less than half of households looking for alternative housing in the Newtown study area wanted to purchase property - 44% compared to 61% in the Aberystwyth area. An equal number of households wished to move to council or new town rented properties, whilst the remaining 8% of respondents stating a preference, were looking to move into private rental accommodation.

Half of all Newtown households were looking for smaller properties - containing one or two bedrooms, with one-quarter wanting to move to flats. A further 35% of households required houses with at least four bedrooms, whilst one-fifth were looking to build their own property.

Table 7.38: Characteristics of preferred property - Newtown study area (percentages)

<u>Tenure</u>		<u>Bedrooms</u>		<u>Type</u>	
looking to buy	44.0	1	4.0	detached house	16.0
looking to social rent	44.0	2	36.0	bungalow	8.0
looking to private rent	0.0	3	4.0	house (general)	16.0
looking to general rent	8.0	4+	28.0	flat	20.0
not stated	4.0	no preference	0.0	self-build	20.0
		not stated	20.0	no preference	12.0
				not stated	4.0

The dominant stated reasons for relocation - as in the Aberystwyth study area - were 'increased family size' (15%) and 'want[ing] to own' (23%), with marriage, a move to a more pleasant environment and moving closer to family each accounting for 12% of stated reasons.

Table 7.39: Reasons stated for seeking alternative housing - Newtown study area (percentages)

increased family size	16.0
'want to own'	20.0
more pleasant environment	12.0
retirement	8.0
poor housing condition	8.0
closer to family	12.0
marriage	12.0
employment	0.0
nearer services	0.0
other / not stated	12.0

Four households looking for alternative housing were registered on the council waiting list, with one of these households also on a housing association list. Relative to social housing applicants in the Aberystwyth study area, households on the list had been waiting for a longer period - with three-quarters registered for more than a year.

Five respondents provided details of the maximum affordable price of property. Three were looking for properties priced up to £50 000, whilst the other two households required properties priced in excess of £60 000. Only three respondents indicated a maximum affordable weekly rent, with two able to afford up to £30 per week, and the other household willing to pay a maximum weekly rent of £40.

Table 7.40: Maximum affordable price of property - Newtown study area (percentages)

<u>Purchase price</u>		<u>Rental</u>	
up to £40 000	40.0	up to £30 per week	66.7
£41 000 - £50 000	20.0	£31 - £40 per week	33.3
£51 000 - £60 000	0.0	£41 - £50 per week	0.0
£61 000 - £80 000	20.0	£51 - £60 per week	0.0
over £80 000	20.0		

The preferred locations of households looking for alternative housing revealed a similar pattern to that uncovered in the previous area. In short, 44% of households living in urban areas, and 45% of those within larger, accessible villages wished to remain within their present community, compared to only of one-fifth of such households living in smaller, remote villages.

Table 7.41: Preferred locations of households looking for alternative accommodation - Newtown study area

<i>current location</i>	<i>preferred location</i>	<i>Number of movers</i>
Newtown (sub)urban area	Newtown urban areas	4
	village within study area	4
	town outside study area	1
larger, accessible villages	same village	5
	village within study area	1
	Newtown urban areas	3
	town outside study area	2
smaller, remote villages	same village	1
	village within study area	3
	area outside study area	1

7.93 Newcomers versus locals

Finally, a breakdown of households looking for alternative housing by length of residence revealed that, in each area, a higher proportion of newcomer households (moving to the area within the last ten years) than locals wanted to relocate. For example, in the Aberystwyth study area, 17% of newcomer households contained at least one person contemplating a housing move, compared to only 8% of locals. Likewise, the corresponding proportions within the Newtown area were 15% and 10%.

7.10 Attitudes towards further residential development and opinions of housing need

7.101 Introduction

Housing conflicts within the British countryside were discussed in Chapter One. Notions of domestic property classes developed by Saunders (1980) were introduced, and attention given to Shucksmith's (1990a, 1990b) adaptation of such class theory to housing opposition amongst various groups within rural areas. However, as Shucksmith pointed out, little empirical work has been undertaken which has examined such rural housing conflicts. The final section of this chapter attempts to shed light on two aspects of housing perception - attitudes towards further residential development and opinions on housing need within the community. It is not intended to provide any authoritative statement on housing attitudes within the countryside, rather the section merely highlights some of the key components of housing perceptions amongst respondents within the two case study areas. In addition, attention is also given to respondents' opinions of the workings of the planning system.

7.102 Attitudes to further residential development within the community

Less than half of respondents in each study area considered that there existed a 'need' for increased housing provision within their community - 35% within the Aberystwyth area and 40% of Newtown respondents. Indeed, around half of all respondents did not want to see any further residential development in the local area. A breakdown of respondents stating an objection to further residential development is provided in Table 7.42. No attempt is being made here to present these twin sets of figures as significantly different, rather the table represents an attempt to map empirically those groups that may be considered to have, or have been claimed to have, oppositional housing interests (see Chapter One).

Table 7.42: A breakdown of respondents against further residential development in the community (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
Length of residence		
locals	52.2	48.6
newcomers	50.6	49.5
newcomers in employment	55.0	50.0
retired newcomers	48.0	53.9
newcomers moving over 50 miles	63.6	55.2
Age		
aged under 45 years	48.5	46.1
aged over 60 years	54.4	51.4
Tenure		
owned outright	56.1	55.4
owned on mortgage	57.1	49.3
social rental	33.3	42.4
private rental	23.1	9.1
Occupational class		
professional and managerial	56.6	51.8
manual	50.0	44.8
Income		
main income less than £7 500 per annum	50.0	61.1
main income more than £15 000 per annum	62.5	47.3

The first point that can be made regarding the table is that, across almost all of these groups, a majority of respondents were opposed to increased housing provision within their community. Indeed, only amongst respondents in private-rental housing were a clear majority in favour of more housing in the local area.

In terms of length of residence within the community, it is clear from the table that there exists little divergence between 'newcomers' and 'locals' over attitudes to further residential development in the local area. Such a finding reflects the heterogeneity of the 'newcomer' group, particularly in relation to motivations behind movement to the area and the socio-economic characteristics of households. In an attempt to consider newcomer attitudes in more detail, a further breakdown of such households was undertaken based on their economic activity (that is, in employment or retired) and the distance of move. In each area, long-distance in-movers (over 50 miles) expressed a higher rate of disapproval towards new housing within the community - 64% of such in-movers within the Aberystwyth area were against further development compared to only 51% of all newcomers, whilst the corresponding figures within the Newtown study area

were 55% and 50%. The distinction between working and retired newcomers was less clear however, with a higher proportion of Aberystwyth in-movers in employment expressing disapproval of more housing, whilst, within the Newtown study area, greater numbers of retired newcomers shared this opinion. Thus, it can be suggested that respondents moving long distances to each study area - whether for retirement or employment reasons - are less in favour of further residential development in their new community.

Less opposition to new housing development is evident amongst younger residents in each area. Within the Aberystwyth area, for example, 54% of respondents aged 60 years or over were against further development, compared to only 49% of respondents aged under 45 years (the 'under 45 years' age cohort was used to represent 'younger' respondents because the 'under 25 years' age group contained too few respondents). Likewise, 51% of elderly respondents in the Newtown study area wanted no new housing in their community, compared to just 46% of persons aged below 45 years.

A clear attitudinal divide is identifiable in terms of household tenure. In short, a higher proportion of property owning respondents were against further housing development within the local area than non-owners. For example, within the Aberystwyth area, opposition to additional housing provision was expressed by 57% of owner-occupiers, 33% of 'social' housing tenants, and only 23% of private sector tenants. Similarly, within the Newtown study area, 53% of property owners, 42% of tenants in social housing and just 9% of private rental tenants were against further residential development in their local area. Such a finding would seem to confirm the arguments of Shucksmith (1990a, 1990b) that housing conflicts within the British countryside resolve around domestic property classes and the ownership / non-ownership of residential property. However, before accepting such a viewpoint, two important caveats need to be considered. Firstly, within the Newtown study area, there exist similar differences of attitude within the owner-occupier group - between outright owners and mortgagees - as between property

owners and social housing tenants. Secondly, in each area, the private rental sector contains a relatively higher proportion of young persons. Thus, it can be suggested that, although significant attitudinal differences are evident between owners and non-owners of property, cutting across this dichotomy are life-cycle factors, with relatively fewer younger respondents against additional housing development within the community.

In terms of an occupational breakdown of opposition to new housing, it is apparent that in each study area, a higher proportion of respondents in households where the main earner (or previous main earner within retired households) was engaged in 'professional or managerial' occupations were against further residential development than respondents in 'manual' households. However, in numerical terms, such occupational differences were of a lesser intensity than property ownership / non-ownership differences.

Finally, the position regarding housing attitudes and income levels appears to be less clear than occupational structure. Within the Aberystwyth study area, a higher proportion of respondents living in households where the main individual income totalled more than £15 000 per annum expressed a disapproval of further housing development in the local area. This said, the opposite situation existed in the Newtown area, where a greater number of respondents in lower income households - where the main annual income was less than £7 500 - were against increased housing provision within the local area.

Thus, it appears that opposition to further residential development within the two case study areas is more complex than a simple property owner / non-owner or occupational class dichotomy. Cutting across tenure groupings is occupational class and income, and vice versa. In addition, stage in the life-cycle appears to strongly affect attitudes towards further housing development. Clearly, more detailed research, of both a qualitative and quantitative nature, investigating the motivations behind such opposition is required, both within rural areas and beyond.

9.103 Perceptions of need - groups affected and housing required

Respondents within each area perceived young people to be in the greatest housing need - with 38% of Aberystwyth respondents and 39% of respondents within the Newtown study area feeling that more housing was required for such persons. Housing provision for elderly age groups was generally felt to be adequate, with only one-fifth of Aberystwyth respondents and 22% of such persons within the Newtown study area considering this group to be experiencing housing need.

Rented accommodation represented the type of housing perceived to be needed most in each study area, with a much higher proportion of respondents in the Newtown area considering that such housing was required - 42% compared to only 26% of Aberystwyth respondents. In terms of the types of rented accommodation needed, council housing was mentioned by 22% of Newtown respondents and 19% of respondents within the Aberystwyth study area, whilst only 8% of respondents in the former area, and 6% in the latter study area considered that increased housing association provision was required. The need for more starter homes for first-time buyers was mentioned by around 24% of Aberystwyth respondents and 22% of respondents within the Newtown area. Finally, and reflecting the differing age structures, a higher proportion of respondents in the Aberystwyth study area felt that increased provision of sheltered accommodation was required in the community - 8% compared to only 2% within the Newtown sample.

Table 7.43: Perceived groups in housing need and types of property needed (percentage of respondents mentioning the following groups and housing types)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
young people	37.5	38.9
elderly people	20.0	21.7
starter homes	24.0	22.0
rented accommodation	25.5	42.4
council housing	19.0	22.2
housing association properties	6.0	7.6
larger family houses	6.0	5.6
flats / bedsits	3.0	6.1
elderly sheltered housing	7.5	2.0

The following section provides a further breakdown of respondents' perceptions of housing need within each study area. In general, it can be seen that there exists a 'socialised' perception of housing need - both in terms of the groups in need and the types of housing required (see Tables 7.44 and 7.45):

Length of residence - again, the length of time spent living in the community did not appear to influence respondents' opinions of housing need in each study area. It is certainly not the case that locals had a heightened perception of housing need in their community, and, in certain cases, newcomer respondents perceived a greater level of housing need - for example, the need for more rented accommodation was mentioned by a higher proportion of newcomer respondents in the Aberystwyth study area. Even amongst long distance in-movers - who expressed a strong opposition to further residential development (section 7.102) - the perception of housing need was of a similar intensity to that recorded amongst locals and newcomers generally.

Age of respondent - the existence of a general housing need was mentioned by a higher proportion of younger respondents (under 45 years), with such persons regarding young people to be the group in greatest housing need - 67% of respondents aged under 45 years in the Newtown area and 42% of such Aberystwyth respondents (the corresponding proportions amongst respondents aged 60 years and over were 50% and 32%). A higher proportion of elderly respondents in each area - 36% in Aberystwyth and 45% amongst Newtown respondents - felt that more elderly accommodation was needed, particularly sheltered housing.

Tenure - in general, respondents in owner-occupied households perceived a lower incidence of housing need than other tenure groups - although a higher proportion of owners felt that more elderly provision was required. In each area, private tenants represented the respondent group that perceived the highest incidence of need in the community across most groups and property types. Further, the perception of housing

need amongst young people was highest amongst mortgagees and private tenants - again, a reflection of the concentration of young people within these tenure groups. Finally, the perceived need for increased rental housing was greatest amongst respondents currently resident within such housing.

Occupational class - perceived housing need amongst occupational groupings varied between the two areas. Within the Aberystwyth study area, a higher proportion of 'professional or managerial' household respondents felt that more starter homes for first-time buyers were needed, whilst increased provision of rental housing, particularly council housing, was cited by greater numbers of respondents in 'manual' households. This said, the need for more housing association properties was mentioned by a higher proportion of 'professional' respondents. Amongst the Newtown sample, the need for increased housing provision across a range of groups and property types was mentioned by higher proportions of 'professional' respondents - including a perceived need for more rental dwellings. However, greater numbers of 'manual' household respondents felt that a need existed for increased council house provision.

Income - similar variations in terms of income levels and perceptions of need were evident between the two areas. In the Aberystwyth study area, for example, a higher proportion of low-income respondents (in households where the main income was less than £7 500 per annum) perceived the existence of housing need across a range of groups and property types. In particular, a much higher proportion of lower income respondents (33%) felt that more council housing was needed than higher income household respondents (10%). Within the Newtown study area, a higher proportion of higher income respondents considered that both young and elderly persons were in housing need - 76% in the case of young people, whilst a greater number of lower income respondents mentioned a need for increased council house provision.

Table 7.44: Perceived groups in housing need and types of property needed broken down by respondent group (percentage of respondents mentioning the following groups and housing types) - the Aberystwyth study area

	young people	elderly people	starter homes	rented accomm.housing	council housing	hsg assoc. housing
Length of residence						
locals	36.3	23.9	23.0	20.4	18.6	2.7
newcomers	40.0	15.3	25.9	32.9	20.0	10.6
newcomers in employment	38.3	10.0	26.7	33.3	23.3	11.7
retired newcomers	48.0	20.0	24.0	32.0	8.0	4.0
newcomers moving over 50 miles	31.8	4.6	36.4	22.7	13.6	4.6
Age						
aged under 45 years	42.4	10.6	33.3	36.4	24.2	13.6
aged over 60 years	32.2	25.6	18.9	17.8	15.6	1.1
Tenure						
owned outright	35.7	25.5	21.4	16.3	12.2	1.0
owned on mortgage	44.4	14.3	36.5	25.4	12.7	7.9
social rental	23.8	19.1	0.0	47.6	52.4	9.5
private rental	46.2	7.7	30.8	61.6	38.5	23.1
Occupational class						
professional and managerial	45.3	20.8	39.6	26.4	11.3	5.7
manual	28.3	21.7	6.5	28.3	30.4	0.0
Income						
main income less than £7 500 p.a.	33.3	33.3	22.2	22.2	33.3	16.7
main income more than £15 000 p.a.	39.6	16.7	31.3	20.8	10.4	2.1

Table 7.45: Perceived groups in housing need and types of property needed broken down by respondent group (percentage of respondents mentioning the following groups and housing types) - the Newtown study area

	young people	elderly people	starter homes	rented accomm.housing	council housing	hsg assoc. housing
Length of residence						
locals	61.7	26.2	19.6	43.0	29.9	10.3
newcomers	60.4	16.5	25.3	41.8	13.2	4.4
newcomers in employment	62.1	26.2	28.8	40.9	10.6	1.5
retired newcomers	57.7	15.4	15.4	46.2	23.1	11.5
newcomers moving over 50 miles	58.6	10.3	27.6	41.4	3.5	6.9
Age						
aged under 45 years	67.4	16.9	24.7	44.9	20.2	5.6
aged over 60 years	50.0	28.6	17.1	37.1	22.9	8.6
Tenure						
owned outright	63.9	27.7	22.9	45.8	22.9	9.6
owned on mortgage	71.0	18.8	30.4	42.0	14.5	5.8
social rental	30.3	18.2	6.1	27.3	27.3	3.0
private rental	72.7	9.1	27.3	54.6	45.5	18.2
Occupational class						
professional and managerial	75.0	16.1	30.4	57.1	14.3	10.7
manual	62.1	15.5	24.1	43.1	27.6	6.9
Income						
main income less than £7 500 p.a.	38.9	5.6	22.2	27.8	33.3	11.1
main income more than £15 000 p.a.	76.4	16.4	29.1	43.6	21.8	9.1

7.104 Reactions to local needs housing schemes

Whilst 51% of respondents in the Aberystwyth area and 49% of Newtown respondents were against further residential development in their community, only 26% and 13% of respondents in the respective areas expressed an objection to a local needs housing development in the local area. In broad terms, objections to low-cost housing schemes in the community were strongest amongst long-distance in-movers, elderly persons, respondents owning property, respondents in 'professional' households, and 'high income' household respondents. This said, the relative weightings on some of these factors varied between case study areas.

7.105 Opinions of the planning system

The final part of this section considers respondents' opinions on the workings of the planning system. In short, it deals with three aspects of this system: the preferred locations of new housing; perceived problems with obtaining planning permission; and occupancy covenants on new properties.

The preferred locations of new housing

An essential component of countryside planning policies in the post-war period has been a presumption against new housebuilding within the open countryside. In the previous chapter, the main aspects of planning policy operating within each case study area were highlighted, with consideration given to the role played by the planning system in preserving landscape and providing 'homes for locals'. With regard to policies which severely restrict residential development in the open countryside, very little public consultation has ever taken place. For this reason, a question was included within the survey format which examined respondents' opinions on this issue.

In each study area, almost half of all respondents stated that they did not mind where new housing was situated. Indeed, 7% of respondents in the Aberystwyth area and 11% of

Newtown respondents commented that new housebuilding should be concentrated within areas of the open countryside. Only three out of ten respondents in each area were in favour of the official policy line - channelling new development into infill sites within designated villages, whilst 11% considered that the overall level of housebuilding needed to be reduced dramatically.

Table 7.46: The preferred locations of new housing (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
in the open countryside	7.0	11.1
within infill sites	32.5	29.3
anywhere / don't mind	47.5	48.5
nowhere / too many already	10.5	11.1

Problems associated with obtaining planning permissions

Within the Aberystwyth study area, perceived difficulties associated with gaining planning consents for new housing were mentioned by 15% of Aberystwyth respondents and 11% of those resident within the Newtown study area. This said, a large proportion of respondents in each area (particularly the Newtown study area) did not feel in a position to comment on this topic, especially those persons living in urban areas. Many respondents expressed feelings of disquiet towards the operation of the planning system, with several suggesting that planning permissions depended on 'who you know'. Others reported that there appeared to be various discrepancies within planning policies, with different decisions being given on very similar applications within certain local areas.

Table 7.47: Respondents stating that local people were experiencing problems gaining planning permissions for new housebuilding (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
problem	15.0	10.6
no problem	49.0	24.8
don't know	33.5	64.7
not stated	2.5	0.0

Occupancy covenants

Whilst there existed a high general awareness of housing difficulties within many communities, a majority of respondents in each study area felt that the scale of such problems did not warrant the introduction of more local occupancy planning permissions. Indeed, only 39% of Aberystwyth respondents and 29% of respondents within the Newtown study area were in favour of an increased use of local occupancy covenants being included within future planning permissions. Again, fewer respondents in the Newtown study area felt in a position to comment on this issue, a possible reflection of the less intensive cultural impact of population in-movement in this area.

Table 7.48: Should more planning permissions be granted to local people (percentages)

	Aberystwyth	Newtown
yes	39.0	28.8
no	41.5	23.2
don't know	17.0	48.0
not stated	2.5	0.0

7.11 Summary

Chapter Seven has focused on the consumption of housing within each study area. Based on a questionnaire survey of 400 households, the chapter examined five key aspects of the local housing market:

(i) The characteristics of households within the housing market - each area recorded a high proportion of 'young family type' households relative to the national (Welsh) mean. This said, the Aberystwyth area recorded a higher level of elderly persons than both the Welsh mean and Newtown study area. Each study area had witnessed a considerable population influx over recent years, with three out of ten Aberystwyth households and one-third of households in the Newtown study area having moved to their present community within the last ten years.

Owner occupation represented the dominant tenure amongst households, with the level of private ownership higher in the Aberystwyth study area (81% compared with 77% of Newtown households). Social rental accounted for 12% of Aberystwyth households and 17% of households in the Newtown area, with private rental making up between 6-7% of total households. The structure of property varied between the two areas, with a higher proportion of older pre-1900 properties within the Aberystwyth area, and more than half of the Newtown housing stock built in the post-1970 period. Smaller properties suitable for first-time buyers were relatively scarce in each study area - accounting for roughly one-quarter of all stock - and tended to be concentrated in the smaller, more remote villages. By contrast, the larger houses, usually built recently, tended to be disproportionately located in the larger, more accessible peri-urban villages. One-fifth of Aberystwyth properties and around 14% of properties within the Newtown study area had been renovated, or had received a major improvement. Such improvements tended to be most prominent amongst the older pre-1900 houses within the smaller, more remote villages.

Around half of Aberystwyth adult residents and 56% of such people in the Newtown study area were economically active. A majority of persons in employment were engaged

in full-time work, with between 23-26% engaged in part-time occupations, and 12-19% in self-employment. The rate of unemployment within the Aberystwyth study area stood at 5.6%, with a corresponding rate of 7.1% recorded in the Newtown area at the time of the survey. The vast majority of residents in employment had their workplace within the boundaries of each study area, with only 8.1% of working Newtown residents and 4.5% of such people within the Aberystwyth study area working outside the study area. Income levels in each study area were generally low, with 26% of Aberystwyth workers and 22% of persons in employment in the Newtown study area earning less than £5 000 per annum. A much greater proportion of women workers earned below this level of income. At the other end of the earnings scale, around 21% of workers in the Aberystwyth study area and 11% of Newtown workers earned annual incomes of £15 000 or more. Finally, around one-quarter of Aberystwyth persons in employment (past and present), and 24.0% of workers in the Newtown study area were engaged in 'professional and managerial' occupations, with slightly more than one-third of workers in each area engaged in 'intermediate non-manual' employment. A further one quarter of workers were engaged in manual occupations and around one in ten were (or had been) working in farming and related occupations.

(ii) In-movement and the local housing market - newcomers (resident in the community for less than ten years) accounted for around 44% of Aberystwyth households and 46% of households in the Newtown area, with the vast majority of in-movement concentrated in the latter half of the 1980s. Considerable variation in the distance of in-movement was evident, with a greater proportion of Newtown newcomer households having moved distances of more than 20 miles (45%) compared with such households in the Aberystwyth study area (31%). However, 44% of Aberystwyth in-movers and around one-third of newcomer households in the Newtown study area had relocated relatively short distances (up to 5 miles). English in-movers accounted for 61% of all newcomer households in the Newtown study area and 44% of Aberystwyth newcomers, with over half of English in-movers to each area relocating from the South-

East and West Midlands regions. In addition, around three out of ten newcomer households in each study area had moved from urban and suburban areas within or surrounding metropolitan counties.

The dominant reason behind in-movement to each study area was employment - accounting for 38% of stated reasons. In-movement to a particular community appeared most influenced by housing factors, although a whole host of 'push' and 'pull' factors were at play. Employment played a relatively minor role in the decision to relocate to the individual community (7.5% of stated reasons amongst Aberystwyth newcomers and 15.3% of such households in the Newtown study area). More than eight out of ten newcomers within each study area were aged under 60 years, with slightly more than one-third aged between 25-44 years. Indeed, the age structure of newcomers appeared to be more 'youthful' than that recorded amongst the 'local' population, with evidence uncovered that suggested an in-movement of a 'young, family type' household to each area.

Around three quarters of newcomer households were property owners (a similar level to that recorded amongst locals), although a higher proportion of newcomers owned their property on mortgage (a reflection of a more youthful age structure). Greater numbers of newcomers were living in private rented accommodation (12% in Aberystwyth and 8% of such households in the Newtown area), whilst less than 15% of in-moving households in each area were residing in social rental housing.

Regarding the employment and income characteristics of newcomers and locals, it was apparent that a higher proportion of in-moving men were economically active than locals. The situation regarding female economic activity levels was less clear, with a greater number of newcomer women in employment in the Aberystwyth area, but fewer in-moving female workers within the Newtown study area. A breakdown of occupations held by 'newcomers' and 'locals' in employment revealed that a higher proportion of the former group - both men and women - were engaged in 'professional and managerial' occupations, whilst 'manual' occupations accounted for greater numbers of local workers, again across both sexes.

In general terms, newcomers in employment tended to earn higher incomes than locals. In the Aberystwyth study area, for example, 40.5% of newcomer male workers earned more than £15 000 per annum compared with 23.5% of local men. Similarly, 27.5% of Newtown in-moving men earned above such an income level, in comparison to only 10.5% of local male workers. The same pattern of earnings emerged amongst newcomer and local women in employment.

(iii) Out-movement and the local housing market - the nature of household out-movement and its links with housing difficulties were examined in the third section of the chapter. Information obtained from respondents suggested that, across both areas, 72 households (18%) had witnessed the out-movement of at least one individual - predominantly a young person (the average age was 20 years) - over the preceding ten year period.

Around six out of ten household leavers in the Aberystwyth study area had moved outside rural Wales, compared to only 28% of such persons leaving the Newtown area. In both cases, however, the vast majority of movement to areas outside rural Wales tended to involve major conurbations, or commuter areas of large towns and cities. Employment was cited as the main reason behind movement out of rural Wales - accounting for at least half of all stated reasons in each study area, with an educational-based relocation also important in both areas. It was generally felt by respondents, however, that such out-movements were inevitable in the absence of major infrastructural investment within rural Wales (economic and service based), with cities offering a more realistic chance of securing high quality, well-paid employment for many young people (particularly those with skills or qualifications).

Household out-movement to areas within rural Wales was also dominated by young people, although the mean age of such movement (22 years) was slightly higher than that recorded amongst persons relocating to areas outside of the region. The bulk of this 'intra region' population movement was contained within the boundaries of each study area. In addition a clear geographical pattern emerged regarding this more localised out-

movement within each study area, with persons from the urban centre and larger, accessible villages tending to remain within their original community, whereas out-movers from the smaller, more remote villages generally relocated to other areas - whether within or without the study area. The most prominent reason stated for such out-movement was marriage - accounting for over eight out of ten Newtown relocations and around 45% of 'intra region' out-movement within the Aberystwyth study area. Other influential factors behind movement from Aberystwyth households were 'employment' and 'independence', each accounting for roughly 10% of stated reasons.

Considerable variation was evident between the two study areas in terms of the characteristics of property moved to by persons leaving the household. Whereas a majority of Newtown out-movers had purchased an alternative property, almost two-thirds of persons leaving households in the Aberystwyth study area had moved into rental accommodation (41% into private rental and 24% had relocated to social rental housing). A majority of Aberystwyth movers had also relocated to accommodation containing one or two bedrooms, compared to only one-third of such people in the Newtown study area.

(iv) Housing need - section four of the chapter investigated the nature and intensity of 'housing need' within each study area. It was suggested that the definition of 'need' used in previous research (particularly the plethora of 'local needs' surveys conducted by rural community councils, and favoured by policy organisations such as Tai Cymru) had included cases which could more appropriately be termed 'lifestyle' moves conducted more through choice rather than necessity.

Across both areas, 49 households were identified as containing at least one person looking for alternative accommodation. A majority of such potential movers involved the entire household with one-fifth of Aberystwyth movers and slightly more than one-third of potential movers within the Newtown study area involving young people leaving the parental home. The survey revealed that a further 17% of respondents living in the Newtown study area and 19% of Aberystwyth respondents considered that at least one member of the household would be looking for alternative accommodation in the next

five years. However, it is not possible - as other research (Clark, 1990) has attempted - to project that these 17% and 19% of households will be in need of housing within the next five years, or even that 12% or 13% of households are presently in need of housing.

Of those households looking to move to alternative accommodation, around six out of ten in the Aberystwyth area, and 44% of such Newtown households wanted to purchase property. Remaining potential movers in the Newtown area were looking for social rental housing, whilst 13% of such Aberystwyth households were looking for private rented accommodation. The most prominent reasons for relocation within each study area were 'increased family size' and 'independence/wanting to own'.

Within the Aberystwyth study area, only 5 out of 24 households presently looking for alternative accommodation, and 4 out of 25 Newtown households were registered on the local authority waiting list. Of those households looking to buy property, a majority in each area were seeking to buy properties priced below £50 000. This said, 20% of Aberystwyth households and 17% of households living within the Newtown study area stated a maximum purchase price in excess of £80 000. In terms of maximum affordable rentals, half of Aberystwyth households and two-thirds in the Newtown study area were looking for accommodation with rentals of less than £30 per week.

With regard to the preferred locations of households looking for alternative accommodation, it appeared that the vast majority were looking to move to properties within each study area. In addition, it emerged that a much higher proportion of households in the urban, suburban and larger, accessible villages within each area wished to remain within their present community, in contrast to the situation recorded in the smaller, more remote villages in which a majority of households were looking for properties elsewhere.

Finally, the survey revealed that a higher proportion of newcomer households were presently looking for alternative housing, which, if adopting the conventional 'local needs' survey definition of need, would seem to indicate that more newcomer households than locals were in need of housing. Such a finding, it can be suggested, necessitates a

more careful investigation of the incidence and nature of housing need in rural communities of Wales.

(v) Attitudes towards further residential development and opinions of housing need - overall around half of all respondents expressed opposition to increased housing provision within their community. A breakdown of responses, however, revealed that opposition was strongest amongst certain groups of respondent. In short, little difference was uncovered between 'newcomer' and 'local' attitudes to new housing development. This said, long distance in-movers expressed a greater level of opposition to further development, compared with both newcomers in general and locals. Age appeared to be important in shaping housing attitudes, with a greater number of elderly respondents wanting no further housing provision. In addition, a clear tenorial divide emerged from the survey, with a much higher proportion of property owners against new housing development than non-owners. Such a finding would seem to support Shucksmith's (1990b) notion of domestic property classes within the countryside. However, two caveats need to be considered. Firstly, there existed similar differences of attitude within the Newtown owner-occupier group - between outright owners and mortgagees - as between mortgagees and social housing tenants. Secondly, the least resistance to further residential development in each area was recorded amongst private housing tenants, the group dominated by young people. Occupation also played an important part in respondents' attitudes to further housing development, with a higher proportion of 'professional and managerial' household respondents expressing opposition than 'manual' household respondents. Finally, the situation regarding income levels was less clear-cut, with a greater number of high income household respondents in the Aberystwyth study area opposed to further housing development, and more low income Newtown household respondents expressing such an opinion.

Respondents perceived young people to be the group experiencing the greatest housing need - roughly four out of ten respondents, and almost double the proportion of respondents who felt that housing was needed most urgently for elderly residents. In

terms of the types of housing required, around one-quarter of Aberystwyth respondents and four out of ten respondents in the Newtown study area mentioned rental properties, particularly council housing. However, slightly less than one quarter of Aberystwyth respondents and around one-fifth of Newtown respondents stated a need for more affordable starter homes for young people.

In general terms, the perception of housing need was highest amongst young people, particularly those living in private rented accommodation. The survey also revealed that perception of housing need was very much socialised according to age, tenure, class and income, with particular groups sharing similar views on the groups most in need of housing within each area. For example, younger respondents perceived young people to be in greatest housing need, and elderly respondents cited their own age group as being in greatest need. Similarly, the need for increased council house provision was mentioned most by respondents currently living in such accommodation. Respondents in 'professional and managerial' households perceived a greater need for starter homes than did 'manual' household respondents, whilst greater numbers of the latter group considered that more social rental housing was required. A similar pattern emerged with regard to income levels, with high income household respondents perceiving a greater need for starter homes, and more low income household respondents citing a need for increased rented housing provision.

Overall, less objection was expressed towards local needs housing development than more general development, with opposition to local needs schemes greatest amongst long-distance in-movers, elderly persons, property owners, 'professional and managerial' household respondents, and higher income household respondents.

The final part of section five dealt with attitudes expressed towards the workings of the planning system. The survey revealed that slightly less than half of respondents in each study area 'did not mind' where new housing was built, with 7% of Aberystwyth respondents and 11% of respondents in the Newtown study area stating that new housing should be built within the open countryside. However, one in ten respondents in each study area considered that there had been too many new houses built in the local area.

Difficulties in obtaining planning permission were mentioned only by a minority of respondents (15% in the Aberystwyth area and 11% of Newtown respondents). This said, there appeared to be considerable ignorance of this topic, with one-third of Aberystwyth respondents and two-thirds of respondents in the Newtown study area not feeling in a position to respond to this question. Finally, around 40% of Aberystwyth respondents and three out of ten respondents in the Newtown study area felt that more planning permissions should be granted which included local occupancy covenants.

CHAPTER EIGHT: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

In the Preface it was stated that there were two important facets of the research project. Firstly, consideration of rural housing within a wider context of economic restructuring and social recomposition within rural Wales, and secondly, the adaptation of research methods and theoretical approaches developed in a predominantly urban arena into the study of housing in the countryside. To these ends, the final chapter attempts to bring together some key findings from the research, relate findings to wider theoretical debates and suggest some avenues for future research on rural housing issues. Chapter Eight is sub-divided into four main parts:

- [i] housing and socio-economic change;
- [ii] key agents involved in the supply and distribution of state and private housing in the study areas;
- [iii] housing attitudes, opinions and domestic property classes;
- [iv] local specificity.

8.2 Housing and socio-economic change

This project has attempted to take a few tentative steps towards seeking empirical evidence to substantiate elements of urban housing theory in a rural context. In many respects, it has not progressed far along this route. It has simply suggested potential linkages between economic change; population, social and cultural change; and the changing competition for rural housing.

In short, the thesis has suggested that changes within regional and local economies are interconnected with changes within population, social and cultural structures as new, predominantly service-based forms of employment relocate to rural areas, and more traditional, predominantly male-based employment declines. Such economic restructuring has been interconnected with both *in situ* social recomposition, as elements of the existing population are forced out of and brought into the formal labour market, and also *external* changes, as in-movers are attracted to the new forms of employment being established in many areas of the Welsh countryside. In fact, the household survey revealed that almost four out of ten in-moving households had relocated to each study area in order to take up a new job in the local area. Alongside this process, some of the younger population are still moving out of rural areas in search of better paid, higher quality employment. Employment was also the main factor behind out-movement from each study area - accounting for at least half of all relocations. Thus, it can be suggested that the (changing) nature of the local economy is bringing in new groups and also forcing others - particularly young, well educated, highly skilled people - out of rural Wales.

Such changes have obvious ramifications for the make-up of groups within the housing market, and also for the nature of competition for rural housing. Put in its simplest form, very little evidence was unearthed that people were moving to and from each study area for specific housing related reasons. That is to say, people were not relocating to each area in order to take advantage of relatively cheaper property prices (although at the time of the survey the cheapness of property was more a past phenomenon rather than present reality), nor were people leaving the areas due to rising house prices or limited rental opportunities. However, it emerged that the availability of smaller, lower priced properties and rental housing did play a large part in relocations within each study area. Indeed, very few respondents in the household survey mentioned housing problems as a major issue within their locality. Housing was seen as important, but was very often placed below issues of employment (or lack of it), low incomes, accessibility and

services. As one female respondent in a remote village within the Aberystwyth study area commented:

"what's the point in building affordable housing if there are no jobs round here. The youngsters want to live nearer Aberystwyth where the jobs are"

These links between housing, economy and society, and the implication that, in many ways, housing difficulties are the symptoms of wider socio-economic problems has obvious implications for (rural) housing policy, and particularly, the recent 'exceptions' policy. Any successful attempt at policy aimed at alleviating the housing problems faced by rural residents must develop integrated strategies that do not deal only with housing. In this respect, the policy recommendations of the Tai Cymru housing conference that a multi-organisational forum should be established to co-ordinate social housing provision alongside social and economic development in rural Wales would appear a useful policy tool.

It is apparent that the competition for existing stock is intensifying with in-moving households characterised by generally higher incomes (than those of the local population). This competition between these two stereotypical groups of 'locals' and 'newcomers' is becoming more unequal, with a much higher proportion of in-moving groups able to buy into rural housing markets. Such a finding, when combined with the fact that population in-movement has intensified throughout the 1980s, has meant that many 'locals' are at a considerable disadvantage when it comes to purchasing property. These inequalities stem from the structure of the local economy and from the restricted range of good quality, well-paid employment available in many rural labour markets. Moreover, many of the new jobs created recently in the study areas, particularly within the service sector have tended to be temporary, part-time or seasonal, as well as being low-paid. This makes obtaining mortgages difficult.

Accompanying this demographic process has been a restructuring of housing provision itself, caused by a steady stream of central government housing legislation in the 1980s.

At worst such housing policies can be seen as blatantly ideological, and at best viewed as having worked against those households least able to buy into home ownership. In short, such legislation has increased the dominance of the private sector as housing provider, and severely constrained the ability of local authorities to intervene within the housing market. Limited or no new housebuilding by local authorities has frozen levels of social rental stock over recent years, which housing associations - given the role of main social housing provider - have been unable to compensate for in any substantial manner. In addition, the 'Right-to-Buy' provisions contained in the 1980 Housing Act, giving council tenants the 'right' to purchase their homes at a greatly subsidised price, have resulted in an absolute reduction of local authority stock available for rent. The 1988 Housing Act attempted to rejuvenate the private rented sector of the housing market, in an effort to shift the bulk of rental housing from the public to the private sector - from state subsidised to private market rentals. Limited evidence from the 1991 Census would seem to suggest that such legislation has been partially successful, with the number of furnished private rented dwellings increasing both throughout rural Wales and the two study areas in particular during the 1980s. However, as the private rented sector has become increasingly deregulated, rents have risen to 'market' levels and changes in housing benefit entitlement procedures have meant that low income households in private rented accommodation are receiving less state subsidy to cope with their increasing rental levels.

In addition to a reduction in social housing provision, the cost of securing housing has increased within rural Wales over recent years, both in terms of the private sector (property prices and rentals) and social housing (council housing and housing association properties). These rising costs, together with record levels of mortgage defaults and property repossessions have meant that some people have been forced out of the housing market altogether. It is surely significant that the number of accepted cases of homelessness within rural Wales has increased at a faster rate than that recorded in urban areas of Wales. Thus, it can be argued that only by considering both the restructuring of

housing provision and the changing competition for rural housing can any meaningful understanding be established of housing problems within rural Wales.

Such social recomposition and restructuring of housing provision has led to considerable discussion on housing need within the Welsh countryside. The growing unequalness of housing competition and the reduction in social rental opportunities has led to calls for special treatment for local people, calls that have been acted partly upon by the Welsh Office in its 'exceptions' policy (housing development could be permitted in areas outside settlement boundaries in special circumstances provided that such development met a demonstrable local housing need). A survey of the fifteen local authorities in rural Wales revealed that six had implemented policies which discriminated in favour of 'locals' in certain circumstances and a further three authorities were in the process of preparing such policies. Most of these policies relied on individuals or communities identifying housing need within the locality by means of a local needs survey. However, the definition of 'need' is open to question and notions of housing 'need' are frequently confused with 'lifestyle-based' decisions to relocate.

The household survey revealed that the most prominent reasons for relocation within each study area were 'increased family size' and 'independence / wanting to own'. Only 8% of stated reasons for moving concerned a clear housing need, namely the poor condition of present property. This said, it is extremely difficult to break down reasons for relocation into 'need' and 'lifestyle / choice' categories. For example, 'increased family size' could represent serious overcrowding in one case or the loss of a spare room in another. Likewise, the response 'want my own independence' could stem from a stage in lifestyle choice of a son / daughter within the parental household, or else might have resulted from a family dispute and the forced expulsion of the young person from the parental household. Clearly, more work, predominantly of a qualitative nature is required on the issue of housing need in rural areas, both in order to eliminate the non-need cases

from being counted by quantitative surveys, and also to gain a further insight of the complexity of need.

A common feature of local needs surveys has been an estimation of a person's maximum affordable price / rental level. Although some doubt may be cast on such an estimation, since respondents may be tempted to provide a lower maximum figure in order to ensure that any future housing provision resulting from the survey would be truly affordable, the present survey included such a question. In terms of maximum affordable rental levels, half of Aberystwyth respondents in households where a person was looking for alternative housing and two-thirds of such people in the Newtown study area stated that they were looking for accommodation with rentals of less than £30 per week. Of those looking to purchase property, a majority in each area stated a maximum price of £50 000. However, 20% of such people within the Aberystwyth study area and 17% in the Newtown area stated a maximum purchase price in excess of £80 000. Clearly, any inclusion of this latter group of respondents in a local needs register would be misleading. Moreover, the survey also revealed that a higher proportion of 'newcomers' were looking for alternative accommodation than locals, although many wished to purchase high priced properties. Thus, there is a danger that if housing needs surveys do not adopt careful criteria for inclusion in their register of need then they might record a situation of 'no homes for newcomers' rather than 'no homes for locals'. Clearly, a more detailed investigation of the incidence and nature of housing need within rural communities is required.

In each study area, the level of housing need - measured by social housing waiting lists and cases of accepted homelessness - had increased over recent years. By the early 1990s, there was one household on the council waiting list for every 2.6 council houses in the Aberystwyth study area, and each Newtown household was waiting for 2.2 local authority dwellings. Demand for council housing showed considerable geographical variation within each study area, with several communities having waiting list totals of at

least half their total council housing stock. This said, expressed demand for such housing was strongest within urban areas, where the bulk of local authority stock was located. In terms of the types of households on the local authority waiting list, information obtained from Ceredigion housing department revealed that elderly people (both single and couples) comprised two-fifths of applicants, non-elderly families made up one-third and one-quarter were non-elderly single people and childless couples. In addition, a breakdown of applicants' present accommodation showed that almost half of applicants on the list were living in private rented accommodation and 7% were presently residing in caravans.

8.3 Key agents involved in the supply and distribution of state and private housing

A second major consideration of the thesis has been the adaptation of urban housing research methodologies and theoretical approaches within the rural arena. In Chapters Five and Six attention was given to some key agents involved in the provision and distribution of state and private housing in each study area. Although recognising that these agents have a relative rather than absolute autonomy within the housing market, they nevertheless represent a considerable element of control and constraint over housing opportunities.

The provision and allocation of social housing - In recent years the level of state intervention in the local housing market has reduced dramatically. In addition, the nature of provision within each study area also exhibited considerable geographical variation. In general terms, this research has confirmed previous studies (Phillips and Williams, 1982; Tai Cymru, 1990b) that the option of a council tenancy is very much limited to urban areas, with six out of ten Aberystwyth area council dwellings located in one town and seven out ten local authority properties in the Newtown study areas concentrated in two towns. In short, around 80% of council dwellings in the former area were

concentrated in only one-quarter of all communities, and nine out of ten such properties in the latter study area were located in approximately one-third of all communities. Council house sales, whilst totalling one-quarter of the early 1980s stock level in each area, also showed significant geographical variation. In general terms, the level of sales was lowest within urban areas, whilst greatest within the outlying villages, particularly amongst three- and four-bedroom houses.

In each study area, local authority property was allocated on the basis of a points system, with tenancies offered to applicants who had accrued the greatest number of points for a particular property type in a specific community. The allocation procedure appeared to be dominated by criteria relating to property structure, basic amenities and severe housing need, with young single people and childless couples having little realistic chance of progressing up the council waiting list. It can be suggested that attention needs to be given to the plight of such people, particular in areas where the chance of securing suitable alternative accommodation is limited - either by the cost and/or availability of private rented accommodation or the high price of property purchase.

Although the level of housing association provision in each study area had increased rapidly over recent years, such growth had only marginally offset 'Right-to-Buy' council house sales across the 1980s. In fact, for every new housing association property provided within the two study areas during the 1980s, two local authority houses were sold to sitting tenants. Relative to council housing, new housing association provision was even more concentrated in the urban centres, and aimed only at general needs groups. Associations active in each study area also tended to be part of larger associations, with only two out of five associations having their head office located in either study area.

The allocation procedures operated by associations were similar to the local authority system, in that each was based on a points system using similar criteria, and allocations

were made to the highest pointed applicants. This said, certain associations attempted to provide accommodation for young people and childless couples who were unable to secure suitable alternative housing in the local area.

Finally, the survey of housing associations active in rural Wales (Appendix B) revealed that considerable variation existed between associations, both in terms of general aims and scales of operation. However, each association intended to increase its scale of operation over both the short and long term, although almost all associations had a waiting list total that was greater than its current stock level. The survey also revealed that rents had increased over recent years and would continue to rise in the next few years, as funding arrangements were changed by Tai Cymru and associations were forced to secure increased finances from private sector lending institutions.

The provision and allocation of private housing - Drawing on the work of Bassett and Short (1980), the investigation of housing provision and allocation within the private market was broken down into three main processes: processes of production; processes involving financing the consumption of housing, and; processes involving the exchange of housing. In many ways, such groupings are similar to those proposed by Saunders (1980), and adapted by Shucksmith (1990b), within his private capital class: finance capital - providing financial resources for property purchase, construction and improvement; commercial capital - exchange professionals (estate agents, solicitors and surveyors), and; landed capital - landowners and private landlords. On one level, the study has aimed to highlight the characteristics and operations of these key agents active within the housing market of each study area. On another level, the investigation has attempted to consider the interests - common and conflicting - of these agents within the local housing market.

With regard to processes of production, the survey of builders revealed that the industry was generally small-scale and concerned more with extension, conversion and property

repair work than with property constructions. Moreover, in each study area, housebuilding was dominated by a single company (responsible for nine out of ten Aberystwyth new builds and almost two-thirds of constructions in the Newtown area). In addition, it emerged that the vast majority of new house constructions were commissioned by individual customers who had contacted individual firms, with very little speculative development evident. Five firms, however, were involved in land purchase, although none of these plots totalled more than one acre. As a result of the small-scale nature of the housebuilding industry and the restricted availability of building land, new constructions tended to be characterised by single large detached houses and bungalows priced at the upper end of the price range.

Although most building firms expressed a willingness to become involved in low-cost housing schemes and social housing projects, very few had been involved in such work, with problems relating to the availability and cost of building land cited as the main obstacles to their involvement. Indeed, the supply and cost of development land, together with difficulties associated with gaining planning permissions appeared to represent the main operational difficulties faced by builders in terms of general housing work.

Intervening between land acquisition and housebuilding is the planning system, cited by many builders as the main obstacle to their operations. Consideration was given to the role of the planning system within each study area and the demands for both 'landscape preservation' and 'homes for locals'. Within the Aberystwyth study area, the planning system appeared more rigid than that in the Newtown area, with a hierarchical planning policy in operation which restricted new development to specific settlements. The Structure Plan covering each study area encouraged sensitive developments in character with existing villages, which, in some cases, necessitated the use of local building materials. In addition, the Powys Plan also considered the linguistic consequences of new housing development in areas of strong Welsh language usage. Within each area housing development in the open countryside was prohibited, although exceptions were considered for key worker accommodation.

A survey of planning applications in each area revealed that the vast majority concerned new builds. However, the nature of applications varied considerably between the two study areas. Within the Aberystwyth area, for example, applications tended to be smaller scale (2.3 dwellings per application) and concentrated in the larger 'key settlement' commuter villages surrounding the Aberystwyth urban centre, whereas Newtown new build applications averaged 3.0 dwellings per application and tended to be located in the more accessible villages to the east of Newtown. In addition, a higher proportion of applications in the latter area involved larger building companies, based outside the study area. A large number of applications in each study area involved conversions of redundant buildings into new dwellings, whilst within the Aberystwyth urban centre, many applications involved conversion of dwellings into bedsitter accommodation (presumably in response to increasing student numbers associated with the university). The survey also uncovered possible evidence suggesting that key worker exceptions permissions in the open countryside were being abused, with 3% of new build applications in the Aberystwyth study area involving a request for a reversal of a previously imposed occupancy condition. Again, it can be suggested that some evidence of 'land banking' (the practice whereby landowners obtain planning permission for a plot of land in order to increase its saleable value in the future) was unearthed, with 4% of new build applications in each area concerning a request for a renewal of a previous permission.

The importance placed on minimum new development in areas of the open countryside by the planning system was illustrated by the fact that four out of ten planning refusals for new housing applications in the Aberystwyth study area resulted from a breach of this open countryside development prohibition. Thus, it would appear, in the Aberystwyth area at least, that residents wishing to remain in smaller, more remote villages will have little realistic chance of building their own home in their local area.

A survey of local building societies involved in financing the consumption of housing revealed that some managers were not keen on advancing mortgages for certain types of property, some of which - for example, timber properties and derelict dwellings - could offer low-cost housing opportunities for local residents. However, no additional evidence emerged of a reluctance to lend to certain occupational groups or geographical areas, although the security of an applicant's employment played a key role in the allocation procedure. Managers stressed that the decision to lend was determined on an individual basis, with 'redlining' more characteristic of inner-city areas, and relatively few 'bad housing areas' existing within each study area. Indeed, managers stated they were more than willing to lend to council house tenants who wished to purchase their property under the 'Right-to-Buy' legislation, since the differential between purchase price and market value meant that the society would always be able to recover the value of the mortgage advance.

A majority of managers stated that they would be willing to lend on properties which contained covenants restricting future occupancy to 'local' people, although it was emphasised that valuations for such properties would reflect their realistic, and not their open market, value, and so consequently would be at a lower level. Such a finding has important implications for the purchasers of this type of housing. If the purchaser wishes to move to another, open market property in the future, then a substantial gulf would exist between the selling price of the 'local' occupancy property and the purchase price of the open market property.

Previous (urban) studies of the operations of estate agents have focused on gentrification (with increased property prices resulting in increased rates of commission), and on their role in channelling certain social groups into different residential areas. Although interviews with agents did not directly discuss these two issues, it was apparent that estate agents were more akin to 'passive intermediaries' (Beaverstock *et al*, 1992) than 'agents of change' (Williams, 1976), adopting a largely pragmatic attitude to the buying and selling of property. This emerged most strongly in discussions concerning valuation

procedures. Although ultimately motivated by profit, agents appeared more concerned with the level of turnover than with inflating the asking price of property for sale with their office. The agent advised the potential seller about a realistic selling price for her/his property, with the latter ultimately responsible for the final asking price. In this respect, estate agents can be viewed as merely being responsive to fluctuations in the demand for housing within the local area. However, interviews uncovered strong links between estate agents and building societies in respect to the valuation of properties for mortgage allocation purposes. Clearly, there exists a need to investigate further these linkages in order to ascertain whether pricing cartels exists within some rural housing markets. Moreover, connections between local agents and certain 'tame' developers would also seem to warrant further investigation.

Estate agents also represent a considerable source of knowledge concerning the characteristics of the private housing market. For example, agents estimated that around nine out of ten properties were, at the time of the survey, being purchased by 'local' people, with 'outsider' demand for housing having declined since the late 1980s. Outsider demand appeared to be characterised by 'traditional' properties, often containing land and located in the open countryside close to the main employment and service centre(s). Property sales were also dominated by the existing housing stock, with newly built properties comprising only 13% of overall sales. Such a finding would seem to confirm other studies (Shucksmith, 1981), that policies which aim to control the provision of new housing will only affect a small proportion of the total housing stock.

Thus, it is far from clear whether these groups involved in the provision and allocation of private housing have similar or oppositional interests. Although it emerged from the surveys that builders wanted a less rigid, less restrictive planning system, little evidence was uncovered to suggest that building societies and estate agents were in favour of a restrictive housing market for reasons of increasing property prices and associated increased mortgage repayments and commission. Clearly, further research is required on this issue.

8.4 Housing attitudes, opinions and domestic property classes

The on-going debate within the housing literature regarding the notion of a domestic property class was addressed partly in the household survey. Attitudes to further residential development and opinions on housing need in each study were examined. In many ways, the survey attempted to examine Shucksmith's (1990b) argument that housing conflicts in the countryside were based around the ownership / non-ownership of property.

Attitudes towards increased housing provision - Overall, the survey revealed that around half of all respondents expressed opposition to further development, with opposition strongest amongst certain groups. In short, attitudes differed little between 'locals' and 'newcomers', although long-distance in-mover respondents expressed a greater degree of opposition than both newcomers generally and locals. Attitudinal differences were apparent between respondents according to age and household tenure, with stated opposition greatest amongst elderly people and those owning their own home. However, two caveats need to be considered. Firstly, in the Newtown study area, attitudinal differences were of a similar magnitude within the owner-occupier group - that is, between outright owners and mortgagees - as between mortgagees and social rental tenants. Secondly, the least resistance to additional housing provision was recorded amongst private rental respondents - the tenure group that was dominated by young people. The occupation of respondents also played an important part in influencing their attitude to further housing provision, with a higher proportion of 'professional and managerial' household respondents expressing opposition than 'manual' household respondents. The influence of income levels on housing opposition, however, appeared less clear cut, with a greater number of high income household respondents in the Aberystwyth study area against new development, whilst more Newtown low income household respondents expressed such an opinion. Thus, it can be suggested that the household survey goes some way in confirming Shucksmith's (1990b) claim that opposition towards further residential development in the countryside is based around the ownership / non-ownership of domestic property in that opposition varied most markedly

between such groups. However, before accepting such a claim it should be noted that clear attitudinal divisions were uncovered based around age and occupational classification. Thus, it may be suggested that opposition to further residential development in rural areas is more complex than a property owner / non-owner dichotomy. Cutting across tenure groupings is occupational class and income, and vice versa, and stage in the life cycle also plays an important part in influencing housing attitudes. There remains a need for further, more detailed, research - both of a quantitative and qualitative nature - investigating the motivations behind such opposition both within rural Wales and beyond.

In general terms, young people were the group perceived by respondents to be experiencing the greatest housing need (mentioned by four out of ten respondents), and elderly residents were cited by a further one-fifth of respondents. In terms of the types of property required, roughly one-quarter of Aberystwyth respondents and four out of ten respondents in the Newtown study area perceived a need for more rental accommodation, particularly council housing. In addition, roughly one-fifth of Newtown respondents and slightly less than one-quarter of respondents in the Aberystwyth study area mentioned a need for increased provision of private sector starter homes.

Although, in broad terms, the perception of housing-need in each study area was greatest among younger respondents and also respondents living in private rented accommodation, the survey revealed that the perception of need was very much socialised according to age, tenure, class and income, with certain groups sharing similar views on the groups experiencing the greatest housing need. For example, younger respondents perceived young people to be in greatest housing need; council tenants considered that more council houses were needed; 'professional and managerial' household respondents felt that private sector starter homes rather than rented accommodation was required; and lower income household respondents perceived a need for more rental housing provision rather than private housing for sale. Such a finding has

obvious implications for local needs surveys, in that the level and nature of perceived housing need within a community will depend as much on the dominant socio-economic groupings within the community as on the actual level of housing need. In this respect, it can be suggested that such surveys may place too much emphasis on residents' perceptions of housing problems, perceptions that may be based as much on prejudice and ignorance as on reality.

Respondents on the whole appeared to be more sympathetic towards local needs housing development. Although around half of all respondents expressed an objection to further general residential development, only 26% of Aberystwyth respondents and 13% of respondents in the Newtown study area stated any opposition to housing development that might meet the needs of local people. Again, the greatest level of opposition to such development was expressed by long-distance in-movers, elderly people, owners of property, 'professional and managerial' household respondents and higher income household respondents.

Very little is known about public attitudes towards the planning system in rural areas. Do people think that it is protecting their interests, working efficiently or favouring some groups at the expense of others ? In order to address these issues, the household survey asked respondents for their opinions on the workings of the planning system within each study area. The first issue that emerged was a questioning of the impartiality or objectivity of the planning system, with several respondents in each area citing cases where, in the same locality, one person (frequently a person with financial, social or political power) would receive planning permission, and another would be refused such a permission. Respondents complained that it was "who you know" that really mattered, and that "if you have the money you can build where you like". Whether such criticisms are based on fact rather than conjecture remains unclear, although it should be noted that Ceredigion District Council planning committee has been criticised for, and admitted granting, illegal planning permissions over recent years. The survey also revealed that

respondents were less concerned about the location of new housing in rural areas than planners would have us believe. In fact, slightly less than half of respondents in each study area stated that they 'did not mind' where new housing was built, and a further 7% of Aberystwyth respondents and 11% of such people within the Newtown study area considered that new housing should be built in areas of open countryside. In this respect, the planning system appears to be 'out of step' with the views of local people and appears therefore to be serving some other interest.

8.5 Local specificity

Clearly, processes of socio-economic change, housing provision, allocation and consumption have varied both between and within case study areas. The rationale behind the selection of the two areas ensured that each recorded a high rate of population and employment growth over recent years. However, the nature and impacts of such growth have varied between areas. For example, the cultural impact of predominately English in-movement has been much more pronounced within the Aberystwyth study area, and the efforts of the DBRW in Newtown have ensured that manufacturing is much more significant within the local labour market in the Newtown study area. Moreover, although each area recorded similar levels of increase in homelessness and considerable reductions of social housing stock over the 1980s, there exists greater social rental opportunities within the Newtown study area (again a result of DBRW intervention).

The characteristics and scales of operation of the key agents involved in the provision and allocation of housing, however, appeared fairly similar within each study area. In addition, there appeared to be little difference in housing attitudes held by respondents in each area.

Finally, it must be stressed that many of the findings within the thesis are specific to the Aberystwyth and Newtown study areas in the early 1990s. No attempt is being made to

present these areas as representative of rural Wales generally, since they have been selected as areas of employment and population growth over the 1980s. Clearly, there are other areas of rural Wales where local socio-economic and housing characteristics are very different: in the National Parks, where planning restrictions are more rigid; in the Llyn Peninsula, where second and holiday homes can make up more than one in ten of a district's housing stock; in the north-west and south-west, where unemployment rates are amongst the highest in England and Wales; and in the north-east coastal belt, where retiree in-movement is particularly strong.

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APPENDIX A A SURVEY OF LOCAL NEEDS POLICIES WITHIN RURAL WALES

Arfon Borough Council

In a document titled Low Cost Housing for Local Need in Arfon, adopted in May 1990, the Council noted that it proposed to use two main methods of securing low-cost housing in its area:

[i] by utilising land held by the council to build low-cost houses - Arfon viewed their low-cost policy as producing the main supply of low cost housing in the borough, with the local needs policy regarded as supplementary. In releasing council-owned land at below-market rates, either to local housing associations or private developers, for the provision of low cost housing for local people, the Council insisted that 'the eligibility of prospective occupiers must be defined and agreed prior to any development commencing'. Evidence of local need or eligibility included satisfying at least one of the following criteria:

- a) length of residence in the district - a person must have lived (main residence) in Arfon for a period of 3 years prior to the date of application;
- b) distance from the site - a person must reside or be employed within a radius of 3 miles from the proposed site. However, this radius could be increased in special circumstances to 7 miles;
- c) close family ties with the area - a person living outside of the borough who has a legitimate need to reside in Arfon due to 'close' family ties with the area. Here, close is defined as father, mother, son, daughter, grandparents, grandchildren;
- d) evidence that the prospective occupier is in need - this may involve restricting occupancy to council tenants, persons on the waiting list, or any other person nominated by the council.

[ii] by implementing local plan policies in a way which specifically catered for local needs - the local needs policy, devised to conform with the Welsh Office draft PPG issued by the Welsh Office, related to land within the boundaries of smaller settlements which had not been allocated for general housing. The procedure adopted after an application was received to build on such land is outlined below:

(a) the applicant is notified by the planning department that the land is subject to a local needs policy which entails the signing of a Section 52 (now 106) Agreement to secure low-cost housing for local needs. The applicant is also asked whether s/he would be prepared to sell the land to a local housing association for a price determined by the district valuer. Simultaneously, the planning department contacts local housing associations in an attempt to gauge their interest in the land. If both parties agree a deal and a transaction takes place, then planning permission is granted to the housing association upon the signing of a Section 52 Agreement;

(b) if no interest is expressed by local housing associations, the planning department contacts the housing department for a list of potentially interested purchasers from amongst its tenants and applicants on the waiting list (although such people must still satisfy the local needs criteria a-d). Again, if sufficient persons with a recognised local need can be found, then a section 52 Agreement is signed limiting future occupancy of the proposed housing to persons satisfying the local needs criteria;

(c) if the housing department is unable to identify sufficient eligible people, then applicants can be invited to submit their own evidence of local needs (complying with criteria a-d). Such evidence must include reasons why potential occupiers could not afford housing on the open market;

(d) if there still remains insufficient evidence of a local need, the application is either refused until such a time when there exists a proven need, or else the applicant is asked to modify the proposed development to reflect the actual existing need.

Ceredigion District Council

The Council adopted a local needs housing policy in May 1989. In the report proposing the implementation of such a policy, the Director of Planning noted that:

"from time to time permissions have been issued in locations which conflict with national and local planning policy on the basis of what has been regarded as being overwhelming local need" (par. 5)

In such circumstances, a Section 52 Agreement had been signed which restricted occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant for a period of 5 years. After this time period, however, the applicant was able to sell the property on the open market. Such exceptions conflicted with the new planning guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment in terms of site location (restricted to small sites adjoining existing villages) and with regard to the conditions attached to Section 52 Agreements (the dwelling should never become available on the open market). In the light of these discrepancies, the Council adopted a two-stage local housing needs policy.

Stage one involved the identification of 'local needs' or 'first-time buyer' sites in the authority's Local Plans programme. If a suitable site was identified, then stage two would come into operation, and the owner would be required to satisfy the conditions outlined below before planning permission would be granted:

- a) the dwelling should not be occupied other than as a sole or main residence;
- b) the dwelling should not be occupied other than by a person (and her/his dependants) who has not resided within a 30 mile radius from the dwelling for at least two years prior to occupation;
- c) the dwelling should not be sold to persons over the age of 40;
- d) the dwelling should not be sold to persons who own or who have previously owned a dwelling.

The Director of Planning considered that a Section 52 Agreement incorporating these conditions would ensure that the dwelling remained available in a restricted local market only in perpetuity. However, it was recognised that:

"land owners, builders and building societies or banks may be reluctant to either release land, construct or finance the construction of dwellings on these terms" (par. 7)

Such a fear was realised, when it became clear, at a later date, that banks and building societies were, in fact, refusing to grant mortgages on dwellings subject to these Section 52 Agreements on the grounds that they would be difficult to resell because of restrictions limiting future occupation. As a consequence, the Council decided to remove the previous ownership rule (d). It was also proposed that the 'under 40' clause should be scrapped, but councillors voted to retain this condition, although agreeing that such a condition could be waived in 'special circumstances'.

Glyndwr District Council

On 20th September 1990, Glyndwr approved a revised Local Plan which contained a policy on 'low cost housing for local needs':

"in exceptional circumstances low cost housing schemes may be considered favourably outside town, main village or village development boundaries" (Policy H10)

Such schemes would only receive planning permission if they satisfied six criteria laid down by the planning department:

- a) the proposal was for genuine low-cost housing and it could be demonstrated, by a detailed local survey, that there existed a local need for this type of housing. However, there would be a general presumption against cross-subsidy schemes outside development boundaries;
- b) there existed no alternative sites or dwellings within the development boundary which would satisfy this need, and there were likely to be no such schemes within two years which could meet this need;
- c) satisfactory arrangements could be secured which ensured that dwellings were retained as low-cost housing for local people in perpetuity. An agreement with a housing association, village trust, or other suitable body involving restrictive covenants and/or a Section 106 Agreement would form part of such agreements;
- d) the site adjoined the development boundary and formed a logical extension to the settlement which did not prejudice countryside protection or conservation policies. It must also have satisfactory access and be capable of being serviced without excessive public cost;
- e) the scale of the development in towns was appropriate to the local need identified. In main villages and villages the scale of development permitted at any one time was 10 units and 5 units respectively. A detailed planning application needed be received within one year of the granting of outline permission and development started within two years of the granting of full or outline permission;

f) design and landscaping was to a high standard. Applications must be accompanied by sketch plans and elevations in sufficient detail to indicate that the scale and design of units were appropriate to meet the identified housing need. For example, a development of four bedroom executive houses would be unlikely to be classified as low-cost homes.

Montgomeryshire District Council

The following local needs housing policy has been taken from Montgomeryshire's Interim Settlement Policy which was operating in July 1990. The policy not only deals with 'local needs' housing, but also relates to the protection of the Welsh language within the district:

"throughout Montgomeryshire the protection and promotion of the Welsh language and culture will be a proper planning consideration in determining all applications for housing development" (par. 7)

The policy proposed that in communities containing at least 40% Welsh speakers in 1981, Welshness would play an important role in determining the success of planning applications.

With regard to local needs housing, it was stated that development outside of settlement boundaries may be allowed if a general local need could be demonstrated, the site was acceptable in planning terms, and suitable controls were able to be exercised. Whenever a claim for a local needs permission was received, the Council would assess whether:

"there is a genuine need (not merely a demand) and that it would be beneficial to the local community to satisfy that need or conversely that it would be disadvantageous not to satisfy the need" (par. 9)

In order to be accepted as being in 'local need' a person needed to satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- a) they have resided in the community for a minimum of 3 years;
- b) they were born and brought up in the community and intend to return or have recently returned to the community;
- c) they are in full-time employment within the community or are moving to the community to take up full-time employment;
- d) they are moving to the community, or wish to move to the community, in order to care for an infirm or elderly close relative who is resident within the community;

e) they have previously lived and worked in the community for a considerable period of time and wish to return.

In addition to satisfying at least one of these criteria, the Council also stipulated that there needed to be no suitable accommodation available for the applicant within the community. For the purposes of the policy, Montgomeryshire defined the term community "on an individual basis bearing in mind the circumstances of each case" (par. 9).

Furthermore, the siting of local needs housing was to be strictly controlled in an attempt to 'retain a truly rural countryside'. Applicants would be encouraged to find plots within existing settlements or, failing this, as close as possible to settlement boundaries. Local needs developments elsewhere would only be permitted if sites within or close to settlement boundaries were proved to be 'unavailable or unavailable at reasonable cost'.

As a condition for granting permission for local needs housing, the Council stated that it would attempt to control aspects of housing design, landscaping, permitted development rights, and occupation of the dwelling in both the short and long term (par. 11). The Council was in the process of preparing housing and landscaping design guides, with which applications for local needs housing would have to satisfy. In addition, applicants would be required to enter into section 52 Agreements in order that:

"all permitted local needs dwellings remain available in perpetuity to people with similar local needs" (par. 11)

Radnorshire District Council

The local needs housing policy adopted by Radnorshire District Council differed only slightly from that in operation within Montgomeryshire, given that the two districts share the same County Structure Plan. The Radnorshire policy offered an alternative definition of the term 'community':

"there is no easy definition of community, but the policy will operate on the generally accepted sense of people living in the same place" (par. 2)

The policy also specified a longer residence requirement of 5 years. However, the Council would consider 'sympathetically' applications from persons living outside the district boundary provided that they complied with other conditions. As with the Montgomeryshire policy, applicants in Radnorshire would be required to enter into a Section 52 Agreement which would restrict any future disposal of the property to specified local persons.

In terms of the siting of local needs developments, the two policies were identical in encouraging applicants to find plots within or close to settlement boundaries. In addition, the Radnorshire policy also attempted to control the design and landscaping of local needs schemes:

"in designing a house to be set in the landscape it is worthwhile studying the area's traditional architecture and appreciate why local buildings look so attractive to visitors' eyes, and how well they served those who worked and lived within. Given correct siting, it is possible for a new dwelling to fit into the landscape through the use of traditional materials and/or traditional shapes" (p6, author's emphasis)

Ynys Mon Borough Council

A local needs housing policy has been included in the draft Local Plan for Ynys Mon. The policy states that within specified smaller settlements, new housing development will be limited to meet local needs of the community. Each application would be expected to satisfy the seven criteria outlined below:

- a) the site is within the defined village envelope or other area of development as indicated on the proposals map;
- b) the need is long term and occurs as a result of changes in the indigenous population;
- c) the development shall not appear conspicuous or incongruous in the landscape;
- d) the development shall not detract from the amenities of nearby occupants;
- e) preference will be given to sites utilising existing natural features to screen the development;
- f) the highway network is adequate and access is satisfactory.

Within the 'most minor settlements', new development would be strictly limited to meeting the specific local needs of an individual community. In addition to the satisfaction of the above criteria, applications in these settlements would need to meet the following conditions:

- a) that the particular need arises as a result of a direct change in the composition of the population or individual households or a special need to live locally;
- b) that the applicant has existing close family within the local community;
- c) that the need cannot be met from within the existing housing stock or by taking up existing planning permissions.

The Council has also formulated a working definition of the term 'local' to be included within the local needs policy. To qualify as a 'local' person, applicants would be expected to satisfy four criteria:

- a) permanently resident within the district;

- b) engaged in full-time employment within the community or entering the community to take up full-time employment;
- c) moving into the community to care for an infirm or elderly close relative who is already resident in the community;
- d) previously resided and worked in the community for a considerable period of time and wish to return.

Furthermore, applicants in the 'most small settlements' would be expected to demonstrate close ties with the community within which they sought accommodation. In all cases, the applicants must not already have similar suitable accommodation currently available within the community.

Finally, permission for such local needs developments would only be granted upon the applicant signing a section 52 Agreement which would limit future occupation of the dwelling(s) to persons living or working within the county of Gwynedd (in the case of smaller settlements) and to persons resident in Ynys Mon (for applicants in the smallest villages).

APPENDIX B A SURVEY OF HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS IN RURAL WALES

B1 Introduction

This appendix attempts to build on information presented in Chapter Five concerning the objectives and allocation procedures adopted by housing associations operating in the two study areas. It is based on a survey of housing associations operating within rural Wales conducted in March 1991. The original intention was to investigate only those five associations active within the two study areas. However, even after follow-up letters and telephone calls, only one association operating within the study areas expressed any interest in the survey. For this reason, and since a questionnaire had already been designed, it was decided to broaden the survey area and include all associations operating within rural Wales. A total of 13 housing associations were identified and contacted, of which 8 participated in the wider survey - a response rate of 62% (or 42% if the five local associations are included).

The main objectives of the survey were three-fold:

- (i) to examine the scales of operation of associations;
- (ii) to consider the groups being catered for;
- (iii) to look at the main problems being faced by associations.

In the analysis that follows the identities of individual housing associations have been withheld in order to honour pledges given to housing managers, and the name of each association has been replaced with a letter (A - H).

B2 The scales of operation

The operations of surveyed associations varied enormously - in terms of number of years, size of workforce and stock of properties (Table B1). In terms of the length of time that associations had been operating, two had been active for less than 10 years, four were

formed between 10-20 years previous, whilst the other two associations had been operating for more than 20 years. The vast majority of associations were small-scale operations, with six employing less than 11 paid staff, and association F being managed by volunteers only. This said, association G - the largest association - employed 371 people. The number of units managed by each association varied, not surprisingly, according to the size of workforce. At the time of the survey in 1990, associations E and F each managed less than 100 units, associations A, B, C and H each controlled around 150-300 units, whilst G had a stock level in excess of 5000 units. Association D had not yet acquired any properties having only been operating for two years.

Table B1: Selected characteristics of rural housing associations

association	years of operation	<u>persons</u> full-time	<u>employed</u> part-time	number of properties
A	10	5	2	167
B	11	7	0	175
C	20	6	1	231
D	2	2	0	*
E	9	0	2	62
F	40	0	0	7
G	26	203	168	5532
H	12	9	2	304

* in process of development

B3 The nature of provision

Table B2 illustrates that across the seven associations that currently managed accommodation, newly built properties dominated provision - accounting for an average of two-thirds of units. Indeed, such accommodation accounted for all the units of two associations (E and F) and a majority of provision in a further two associations (B and G) (see Table B2). Rehabilitation represented the majority provision in three associations (A, C and H), and overall made up roughly one-third of total accommodation. As was noted in an earlier section, the level of rehabilitation has fallen dramatically in recent

years as a result of changes within the grants system. As the officer of association H commented:

"the mixed funded regime has meant that rehabilitation is no longer an option"

With regards to newly constructed accommodation, almost half consisted of individual dwellings, with flats and bedsits accounting for a further one-third of such housing. Only 16% of new builds was specialised sheltered accommodation. This said, patterns of provision varied considerably from one association to another.

Flats and bedsits accounted for an average of almost seven out of ten units of rehabilitated accommodation, and a majority of units in all associations that provided such housing. Remaining rehabilitation units were dominated by individual dwellings - accounting for one-quarter of all rehabilitated accommodation - with sheltered housing making up less than 3% of total units.

Table B2: Types of properties

	Association								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	mean
Newly built	44	98	112	0	62	7	5378	111	
<i>%age of total stock</i>	26.3	56.0	48.5	na	100.0	100.0	97.2	36.5	66.3
Sheltered accomm.	0.0	54.1	0.0	na	14.5	0.0	46.1	0.0	16.4
Flats/bedsits	31.8	15.3	81.3	na	30.6	0.0	33.7	52.3	35.0
Individual dwellings	68.2	30.6	18.7	na	51.6	100.0	20.2	47.7	48.1
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	na	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
Rehabilitated	123	77	119	0	0	0	154	193	
<i>%age of total stock</i>	73.7	44.0	51.5	na	0.0	0.0	2.8	63.5	33.6
Sheltered accomm.	0.0	15.6	0.0	na	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	235
Flats/bedsits	79.7	62.3	74.8	na	0.0	0.0	70.1	55.4	68.5
Individual dwellings	14.6	22.1	25.2	na	0.0	0.0	27.9	37.3	25.4
Other	5.7	0.0	0.0	na	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.3	2.6

Table B3 provides a breakdown of association stock by property size. Across all associations, roughly 44% of housing stock consisted of dwellings containing only one bedroom. A further one-third of properties contained two bedrooms, whilst three- and four-bedroom accommodation made up 24% and 1% respectively of the total stock.

Table B3: Property sizes - number of bedrooms

Association	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	mean
1	56.5	66.3	62.6	na	40.3	0.0	55.0	27.2	44.0
2	35.5	32.6	37.4	na	53.2	0.0	29.4	33.6	31.7
3	8.0	1.1	0.0	na	3.2	100.0	15.4	38.4	23.7
4	0.0	0.0	0.0	na	3.2	0.0	0.3	0.8	0.6

In terms of the types of tenure schemes available, each association offered accommodation to rent, flex-ownership schemes were currently being operated by two associations, with another two planning to introduce such a scheme in the near future. In addition, two associations were also involved in shared ownership schemes, with a further three proposing to implement such a scheme within the next five years.

Table B4: Different schemes available

	Association								Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
Rental	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Shared Ownership	P	P			P		*	*	5
Flexible Tenure	P	P					*	*	4

P = proposed

B4 Recent changes in provision

Six housing officers provided information on changes in stock levels over recent years, of which two associations had only been operating since 1988. In five of these associations, provision had risen across the mid-to-late 1980s - ranging from 38% (association E) to 500% in association B. Overall, accommodation provided by these five associations had increased from 3 569 units in 1988 to 6 120 units in 1990 - a growth rate of 71% over three years.

Table B5: Changing levels of housing stock

Year	Association							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1985	*	26	ns	na	*	*	2800	94
1986	*	26	ns	na	*	*	2831	110
1987	*	57	ns	na	*	*	3005	128
1988	82	77	ns	na	40	9	3200	161
1989	112	110	ns	na	49	8	3375	199
1990	135	156	ns	na	55	7	5532	235

* not operating

B5 Plans for the future

Six associations provided details of their planned provision in future years. Each association intended to increase its stock level over the next 12 months - from 2% (G) to 375 (A), and association D planned to provide its first 25 units of accommodation in the 1990-91 period. Five of these associations were also able to provide an indication of planned provision over the next five years. Two officers stated that their association planned to double its present stock level between 1990-95, whilst associations C and G intended to increase provision by 87% and 11% respectively across this period. Association D aimed to provide four times its intended 1990-91 provision over this five year period.

Table B6: Increased future provision of units

	Association							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Next 12 months	61	35	70	25	ns	ns	120	60
Next 5 years	ns	300	200	111	ns	ns	600	375

The types of property planned for the immediate future showed considerable variation between associations: association A stated that future provision would be "dictated by local authority plans and need"; association B planned to provide "flats, houses and bungalows for rent, shared-ownership and flexible tenure in central Carmarthen and

village locations"; C projected an increase in "homes for families and single persons, but outside rural Wales"; D planned to provide "self-contained flats for women suffering domestic violence, all in fair-sized communities, with none in very rural locations"; association G projected growth in "hostels/cluster units, flats for single people and larger houses, all in urban areas, and small houses for young couples in both urban and rural areas"; and association H stated that future provision would be "almost all new build - dwellings and flats, with expansion into three other districts in rural Wales".

B6 Waiting lists

Seven housing officers provided the current waiting list size of their association, with these ranging from 10 households (association D) to 1250 households in association G (Table B7). In five associations, waiting lists were far greater than stock levels, whilst those waiting for housing with association G totalled only one-fifth of the stock level. The greatest gulf between waiting lists and stock levels occurred in association E, where 300 applicants were waiting for a total stock of 62 properties. In addition, information supplied by two associations suggested that waiting lists were increasing - the size of association A's list grew by 73% in its first two years of operation, whilst a rise of 66% was recorded by association H between 1985-90.

Table B7: Waiting list levels

Year	Association							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1985							403	
1986							440	
1987							555	
1988							480	
1989	253						253	
1990	438	400	350	10	300	na	1250	705
<i>households per unit of accommodation on waiting list</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>2.3</i>

B7 The groups being catered for

Housing officers were asked to provide information on the groups that were being catered for by their association. A total of eleven groups were cited (Table B8), with five associations catering for at least five of these groups. Two associations provided housing for just one group - D catered solely for women suffering domestic violence, and F provided housing for key workers. Such variations across these rural associations reflect the range of objectives and allocation procedures of different associations, some of which were highlighted in Chapter Five. In short, the groups most widely catered for by associations within the rural region in 1991 were - general needs families (6 associations); elderly persons (5); single persons (5); and the mentally ill (5).

Table B8: Groups being catered for by each association

	Association								Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
general needs (family)	*	*	*		*		*	*	6
elderly	*		*		*		*	*	5
single	*		*		*		*	*	5
mentally ill		*	*		*		*	*	5
physically disabled	*	*					*	*	4
women suffering domestic violence	*		*	*					3
young couples		*					*	*	3
people with learning difficulties	*							*	2
young vulnerable	*								1
key workers						*			1

B8 Funding

Each of the five associations that provided details of funding levels in recent years reported an increase in allocated resources in the latter half of the 1980s. In the 1985-90 period, increased Tai Cymru funding (the Housing Corporation prior to 1989) ranged from 63% (association B) to 420% (association G). By 1990, levels of funding were highest for association G (£13 million) and lowest for association D - where only £650 000 was received.

Table B9: Levels of funding from Tai Cymru (£ million)

	Association							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1985		0.79	0.80			none	2.50	0.70
1986		0.84	0.80				5.00	0.80
1987		0.96	0.85				2.10	0.80
1988		1.70	0.85				3.30	0.90
1989		1.15	0.90				8.80	1.30
1990	1.30	1.20	1.10	0.65			13.00	1.30
1991	1.50	1.50	1.30	ns	ns	ns	2.50	

B9 Problems being encountered

Finally, each officer was asked about operational difficulties being encountered by their housing association. In total, five housing officers stated that their association was currently experiencing certain problems. The officer from association A commented that: "rents were having to be increased on new schemes, whilst maintaining standards of design and specification was *making it difficult to keep prices affordable*". The officer for association B noted that there were "more applicants in real need than could be housed, particularly amongst young single people", with association D was also experiencing "problems developing units at affordable rents with the grant rates received from Tai Cymru". Problems facing association G included "acquiring land at the right price, obtaining planning permission in the National Park, and [obtaining] extra finance to satisfy need". Finally, association H reported that "sites were expensive, as were older properties suitable for rehabilitation, with rent levels rising sharply due to mixed funding and high interest rates".

APPENDIX C HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, UCW, ABERYSTWYTH

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

REGION URBAN[] LARGE VILLAGE[] SMALL VILLAGE[]
COMMUNITY_____
CASE NUMBER_____
DATE_____

RESPONDENT MALE HEAD [] FEMALE HEAD []
 OTHER [] please specify_____

PROPERTY TYPE DETACHED [] SEMI-DETACHED [] FLAT []
BUNGALOW [] TERRACED [] CARAVAN [] OTHER []

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

HOUSEHOLD MEMBER		AGE	M/F	AGE				
				0-14	15-24	25-44	45-59	60+
1	MALE HEAD	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
2	FEMALE HEAD	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
3	CHILD 1	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
4	CHILD 2	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
5	CHILD 3	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
6	CHILD 4	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
7	OTHER ADULT 1	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5
8	OTHER ADULT 2	[]	[]	1	2	3	4	5

DO YOU LIVE HERE PERMANENTLY ? YES [] NO []

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THIS PROPERTY ?
1 2 3 4 5 6
LESS THAN 1-5 YRS 6-10 YRS 11-20 YRS 21-30 YRS 30+ YRS
ONE YR

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THIS SUB-AREA (TOWN/VILLAGE) ?
1 2 3 4 5 6
LESS THAN 1-5 YRS 6-10 YRS 11-20 YRS 21-30 YRS 30+ YRS
ONE YR

IF LIVED IN TOWN/VILLAGE FOR LESS THAN TEN YEARS, WHERE DID YOU
MOVE FROM ?

WHICH OF THESE REASONS WAS MOST IMPORTANT IN YOUR DECISION TO MOVE TO THE REGION (RURAL WALES) ?

CLOSE TO FRIENDS / RELATIVES	1
CLOSE TO EMPLOYMENT	2
PLEASANT / ATTRACTIVE COUNTRYSIDE	3
RETIREMENT	4
SUITABILITY / AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING	5
RETURN MIGRATION	6
AREA OF PAST HOLIDAY	7
OTHER (please specify)	8 _____

WHICH OF THESE REASONS WAS MOST IMPORTANT IN YOUR DECISION TO MOVE TO THIS VILLAGE/TOWN ?

CLOSE TO FRIENDS / RELATIVES	1
CLOSE TO EMPLOYMENT	2
PLEASANT / ATTRACTIVE COUNTRYSIDE	3
RETIREMENT	4
SUITABILITY / AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING	5
RETURN MIGRATION	6
AREA OF PAST HOLIDAY	7
OTHER (please specify)	8 _____

ROUGHLY WHEN WAS THE PROPERTY BUILT ?

PRE 1900	1	1900-45	2	1946-60	3	1961-70	4
1971-80	5	1981-85	6	1986-90	7		

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS IN PROPERTY ?

NONE	1	ONE	2	TWO	3	THREE	4	FOUR +	5
------	---	-----	---	-----	---	-------	---	--------	---

IS THE PROPERTY OWNED OR RENTED ?

OWNED OUTRIGHT	1
OWNED ON MORTGAGE	2
RENTED FROM LA/DBRW	3
RENTED FROM HA	4
PRIVATE RENTED	5
RENT FREE	6
OTHER	7

HOW DID YOU FIND THIS PROPERTY?

LOCAL NEWSPAPER	1
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER	2
ESTATE AGENT	3
WORD-OF-MOUTH (FRIENDS/RELATIVES)	4
ALLOCATED BY LA/HA	5
OTHER (please specify)	6 _____

SINCE MOVING TO THIS PROPERTY, HAVE YOU MADE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ALTERATIONS

HOUSING NEEDS

SITUATION OF CHILD / OTHER PERSON

	PERSON 2	PERSON 3
PRESENT VILLAGE/TOWN	1 _____	1 _____
NEARBY VILLAGE	2 _____	2 _____
NEARBY TOWN	3 _____	3 _____
ELSEWHERE	4 _____	4 _____
DONT KNOW / NO PREFERENCE	5	5

TYPE OF PROPERTY BEING LOOKED FOR ?		P1	P2	P3	P4
	WHOLE H'HOLD				
DETACHED HOUSE	1	1	1	1	1
SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE	2	2	2	2	2
TERRACED HOUSE	3	3	3	3	3
BUNGALOW	4	4	4	4	4
FLAT	5	5	5	5	5
MOBILE HOME	6	6	6	6	6
SHELTERED ACCOMM.	7	7	7	7	7
OTHER	8	8	8	8	8
NO PREFERENCE	9	9	9	9	9

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS REQUIRED ?	WHOLE H'HOLD	P1	P2	P3	P4
	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

LOOKING TO BUY OR RENT ?	WHOLE H'HOLD	P1	P2	P3	P4
BUY	1	1	1	1	1
RENT FROM COUNCIL	2	2	2	2	2
RENT FROM HSG ASSOC.	3	3	3	3	3
PRIVATE RENT	4	4	4	4	4
DONT MIND	5	5	5	5	5

MAXIMUM AFFORDABLE RENT / PURCHASE PRICE ?

WHOLE H'HOLD	RENT £ _____ PER WEEK	BUY £ _____
PERSON 1	RENT £ _____ PER WEEK	BUY £ _____
PERSON 2	RENT £ _____ PER WEEK	BUY £ _____
PERSON 3	RENT £ _____ PER WEEK	BUY £ _____
PERSON 4	RENT £ _____ PER WEEK	BUY £ _____

APPLICATION TO LOCAL AUTHORITY ?

TIME ON LIST	WHOLE H'HOLD	P1	P2	P3	P4
LESS THAN 6 MONTHS	1	1	1	1	1
6 - 12 MONTHS	2	2	2	2	2
1 - 5 YEARS	3	3	3	3	3
MORE THAN 5 YEARS	4	4	4	4	4

APPLICATION TO HOUSING ASSOCIATION ?

TIME ON LIST	WHOLE H'HOLD	P1	P2	P3	P4
LESS THAN 6 MONTHS	1	1	1	1	1
6 - 12 MONTHS	2	2	2	2	2
1 - 5 YEARS	3	3	3	3	3
MORE THAN 5 YEARS	4	4	4	4	4

MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR SEEKING ALTERNATIVE HOUSING ?

	WHOLE H'HOLD	P1	P2	P3	P4
MARRIAGE	1	1	1	1	1
DIVORCE / SEPARATION	2	2	2	2	2
RETIREMENT	3	3	3	3	3
INCREASED FAMILY SIZE	4	4	4	4	4
DECREASED FAMILY SIZE	5	5	5	5	5
EMPLOYMENT	6	6	6	6	6
POOR PROPERTY CONDITION	7	7	7	7	7
ACCESS TO SERVICES	8	8	8	8	8
OTHER (please state)	9	9	9	9	9

OUT-MOVEMENT

HAS ANYBODY LEFT THE HOUSEHOLD IN THE LAST TEN YEARS ?
IF YES, HOW MANY []
HOW MANY MOVED WITHIN RURAL WALES ? []
HOW MANY MOVED OUTSIDE RURAL WALES ? []

FOR THOSE MOVING WITHIN RURAL WALES

	MALE/ FEMALE	AGE OF OUT- MOVEMENT	PLACE MOVED TO
PERSON 1	1 2	[] YRS	
PERSON 2	1 2	[] YRS	
PERSON 3	1 2	[] YRS	

REASON FOR OUT-MOVEMENT ?

	MARR- IAGE	EDUC- ATION	EMPLOY- MENT	OTHER (please state)
PERSON 1	1	2	3	4 _____
PERSON 2	1	2	3	4 _____
PERSON 3	1	2	3	4 _____

PROPERTY TYPE MOVED TO

	PERSON 1	PERSON 2	PERSON 3
FLAT	1	1	1
TERRACED HOUSE	2	2	2
BUNGALOW	3	3	3
DETACHED HOUSE	4	4	4
SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE	5	5	5
OTHER	6	6	6

TENURE

OWNER-OCCUPATION	1	1	1
COUNCIL RENTED	2	2	2
HSG ASSOC RENTED	3	3	3
PRIVATE RENTED	4	4	4
OTHER	5	5	5

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS	[]	[]	[]
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FOR THOSE MOVING OUTSIDE RURAL WALES

	MALE/ FEMALE	AGE OF OUT- MOVEMENT	PLACE MOVED TO
PERSON 1	1 2	[] YRS	_____
PERSON 2	1 2	[] YRS	_____
PERSON 3	1 2	[] YRS	_____

REASON FOR OUT-MOVEMENT ?

	MARR- IAGE	EDUC- ATION	EMPLOY- MENT	OTHER (please state)
PERSON 1	1	2	3	4 _____
PERSON 2	1	2	3	4 _____
PERSON 3	1	2	3	4 _____

FACTORS THAT COULD HAVE RETAINED OUT-MOVER WITHIN RURAL WALES ?

	EMP.	HSG.	SOCIAL	NONE	OTHER (please state)
PERSON 1	1	2	3	4	5 _____
PERSON 2	1	2	3	4	5 _____
PERSON 3	1	2	3	4	5 _____

HOUSING ATTITUDES

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE HOUSING WITHIN THE VILLAGE / TOWN / COMMUNITY ? YES 1 NO 2

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF HOUSING IS/ARE NEEDED MOST IMPORTANTLY IN THE VILLAGE / TOWN / COMMUNITY ?

HOUSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
HOUSING FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
RENTED HOUSING	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
COUNCIL HOUSING	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
HOUSING ASSOCIATION	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
STARTER HOMES	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
LARGE FAMILY HOUSES	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
FLATS / BEDSITS	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3
OTHER	YES	1	NO	2	D/K	3

WOULD YOU HAVE ANY OBJECTIONS TO A LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY ? YES 1 NO 2

IF YES. COULD YOU EXPLAIN BRIEFLY YOUR CONCERN_____

WHERE SHOULD NEW HOUSING BE BUILT ?

IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE	1
INFILL SITES WITHIN ESTABLISHED SETTLEMENTS	2
ANYWHERE / DON'T MIND	3
NOWHERE - TOO MANY HOUSES BEING BUILT	4

SHOULD MORE PLANNING PERMISSIONS FOR NEW HOUSING INCLUDE A COVENANT LIMITING OCCUPATION TO LOCAL RESIDENTS ?

YES	1
NO	2
DON'T KNOW	3

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ON THE HOUSING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY_____

EMPLOYMENT

WHAT IS THE CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF EACH MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD ?

	MALE HEAD	FEMALE HEAD	CHILD ONE	CHILD TWO	CHILD THREE	OTHER ADULT
WORKING FT	1	1	1	1	1	1
WORKING PT	2	2	2	2	2	2
SELF-EMPLOYED	3	3	3	3	3	3
SEEKING WORK	4	4	4	4	4	4
RETIRED	5	5	5	5	5	5
HOUSEPARTNER	6	6	6	6	6	6
SCHOOL/COLLEGE	7	7	7	7	7	7
SICK	8	8	8	8	8	8
OTHER	9	9	9	9	9	9

IF WORKING

	PLACE OF WORK	JOB TITLE
MALE HEAD		
FEMALE HEAD		
CHILD ONE		
CHILD TWO		
CHILD THREE		
OTHER ADULT		

ANNUAL INCOME

	Under £5000	£5000- £7499	£7500- £9999	£10000- £14999	£15000 & Over
MALE HEAD	1	2	3	4	5
FEMALE HEAD	1	2	3	4	5
CHILD ONE	1	2	3	4	5
CHILD TWO	1	2	3	4	5
CHILD THREE	1	2	3	4	5
OTHER ADULT	1	2	3	4	5

IF RETIRED, PREVIOUS MAIN JOB TITLE

MALE HEAD	
FEMALE HEAD	
OTHER ADULT	

